



**THE UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS
LIBRARY**

**285.505
RE
v. 4**

The person charging this material is responsible for its return to the library from which it was withdrawn on or before the **Latest Date** stamped below.

Theft, mutilation, and underlining of books are reasons for disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the University.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

BUILDING USE ONLY

AUG 26 1977

AUG 26 1977

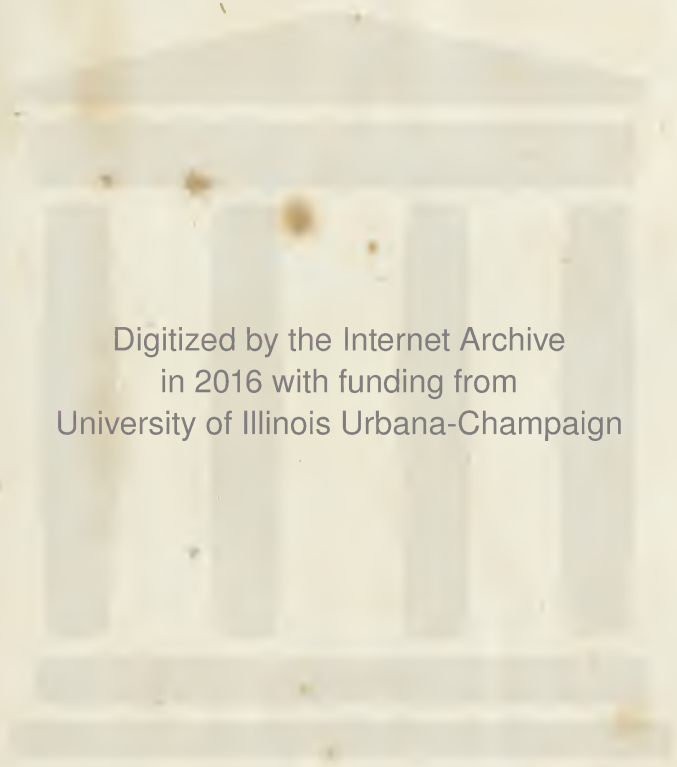
MAY 9 1979

MAY 9 1979

JUL 15 1980

JUL 15 1980





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

z. p. bound
in back of vol.

State of *T. Moore* *Conn.*
THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

MARCH, 1840.

No. I.

EXPLICATION OF MATT. XIX. 16—22.

“And, behold one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness; Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.”

This passage, with its parallels in Mark x. 17—22, and Luke xviii. 18—23, has often been explained by those false glosses, whereby many parts of Scripture have been pressed into the support of error and heresy. Our readers need hardly be informed, that the opposers of the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, by whatever name they have been, or are now known, triumph in it as one of their strong holds: while they, who have taught, or now teach, that we are justified, in whole, or in part, in the sight of God by our own personal obedience, produce a part of it, the latter, as unanswerable proof of, their dangerous doctrine. All that we intend in the explication of the passage is, *First*, To examine the interpretation of Socinians, Unitarians, Arians, &c., hoping to shew, not only that their interpretation is false, but also, that they have pressed into their cause, a passage which

makes directly and clearly against them ; And, *Second*, To refute the view taken by Pelagians, Arminians, Hopkinsians, &c., when they employ the passage in proof of justification by good works.

Socinians and others who believe with them, tell us, that Christ, in saying, "Why callest thou *me* good ? There is none good but *one*, that is *God* ;" reproved the young man for applying to him a title which he did not, could not claim ; that he marked the epithet *good* as the peculiar attribute of his Father, and therefore peremptorily rejected the honors of divinity. Two or three observations will show that this argument is utterly baseless.

1. To rest the proof of an article of faith on a term of general and indefinite signification, is at all times dangerous, and affords just ground of suspicion that unequivocal and valid evidence is wanting. *Good* is such a term. The nature and extent of its meaning vary with its connection and its subject. From a proper consideration of these only, can we determine with precision its particular sense in any case. We grant, that in the passage before us, it denotes the infinite excellence of the living God. This is evident from the subject to which the assertion relates—from the occasion on which it was uttered—and from the absolute and unqualified manner in which the ascription of goodness is made. Yet this by no means justifies an inference against the true and proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. For, in another part of scripture, the epithet *Good* is applied in its fullest latitude to the Holy Spirit. Ps. cxliii. 10—"Thy *Spirit* is Good." Now if the absolute and unqualified ascription of goodness demonstrates the true and proper Deity of the Father, to the exclusion of the Son and the Spirit ; an ascription of goodness, no less unqualified and absolute, equally demonstrates the true and proper Deity of the Spirit, to the exclusion of the Father and of the Son. This conclusion, which, on the principles of the opinion we are opposing cannot possibly be avoided, is not more absurd and unscriptural in itself, than it is destructive of the Socinian scheme.

2. The argument under consideration takes for granted, that the Lord Jesus, in the text, does really restrict the ascription of goodness to his Father. This is both gratuitous and untrue. He does not say, as Socinians attempt to make him say, There is none good but one, that is *my Father* ; but restricts his assertion to the *Divine Nature*. Had he limited

it to the *Person* of his Father, he would have contradicted the Psalmist, who affirms "Thy Spirit is good;" and would have spoken inconsistently with his own declaration, when he said "I and my Father are one." John x. 30. The Socinian interpretation of this passage sets Christ against David speaking by the Spirit of God—yea, sets Christ against Christ.

3. If we analyze the passage closely, we will find that the Savior, so far from denying his divinity, furnishes by his conduct on the occasion, when compared with his doctrine, the most indubitable evidence of this glorious truth. "Good Master" is a title which the Jews gave to those who expounded the law, or rather made the law of God of none effect by their false interpretations and innumerable traditions. But the Jews did not apply this epithet to their teachers as we apply it when we say a *good* man, or a *good* citizen, &c. The title designated authority; so that when they accosted their teachers with "Good Master," they meant to acknowledge that these teachers had a right to determine what is good, and what is evil, what is sinful, and what is righteous, what could merit eternal life, and what would procure eternal death. So far indeed had the Jewish teachers inculcated the notion that this was their prerogative; and so universally was it acknowledged among the people, that all respect for the authority of God was lost in their respect for the authority of the teachers, and the law of God actually driven out of its place to make room for their false interpretations. Christ charges the Scribes and Pharisees with having, in this way, made void the fifth commandment. Matt. xv. 3—6,—"God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother," a command which, among other things, requires from children necessary support for their parents. But say the teachers, "Whosoever shall say to his father or mother, it is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and honor not his father or his mother, he shall be free," that is, if parents require support from any of you, if you take what you might or should have given to them, and call it a gift to the service of the temple or to the support of your religious teachers, you are freed from the obligation of honoring father and mother.

Believing that Jesus had set himself up for such a teacher, or such a "Master," in Israel, the young man, who was a ruler, comes with the question, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do?" &c. Would it have been honest in Christ, who

was the great teacher sent from God, to allow those who came to him for instruction to remain under ruinous mistakes while they betrayed themselves, and evidenced their mistakes in the very words in which they addressed him? No, this was not the Savior's way. Accordingly he sets himself to correct this prevalent and ruinous mistake with regard to the authority of the teachers, and asks "*Why* callest thou me good?" That in these words he reproves the ruler is plain. But he reproves him not for calling Him good, but for doing it ignorantly, and with mistaken views of the person whom he was addressing. The point of the question lies in the word *why*, and not in the word *good*. Christ's inquiry is, To what purpose do you give me this title? What is your meaning by it? What warrants you in applying it to me? Do you call me good, merely because you view me as a teacher, or as a master in Israel? and while you regard me as a mere man, as standing on a level with your other teachers? If so, you are very far wrong. To apply goodness in the sense in which you understand it, to one who is a mere man—no more than a human teacher, is nothing less than idolatry. It is stripping God of his attributes and prerogatives, and bestowing them upon a creature. Adding, "There is none good but one, that is God." God alone has authority to pronounce what is good, and what is evil; what is sinful, and what is righteous; what will merit eternal life, and what shall lead to eternal death. But on the other hand, do you view me in my true character, do you acknowledge me to be God as well as man; and do you give me this title as an expression of your faith in my infinite goodness, and supreme authority? Then you are right in giving it to me; for I have a just claim to it, and as a proof that I have a right to this title, and that I, being a Divine Person, and possessed of supreme authority, have the disposal of eternal life in my own hands, I will decide on the appeal which you have made to me. And accordingly, our Savior proceeds to give his answer,—"*If thou wilt enter into life,*" &c. In the very fact of his answering the ruler's question, it is undeniably implied that he is God. For otherwise he allows his own conduct to contradict the very doctrine which he had just been uttering. One moment he tells the ruler, No one has a right to acknowledge your appellation, or to answer your question, but he who is God; and the next moment, he acknowledges *His* claim to the title, by answering

the question which had been proposed to him. If Christ is not God, this conduct had a direct tendency to lead the ruler's judgment astray, with regard to the doctrine of his person; and if there is not here an intended acknowledgment and assertion of his divinity, his conduct cannot be made to correspond with his words. Verily the connexion that exists between all false doctrine and blasphemy, is here seen in its native nakedness. But we proceed,

II. To refute the view taken of the latter part of this passage by those who maintain the doctrine of justification by good works. An examination of this also furnishes additional proof that Christ, on the occasion referred to, claimed for himself divinity. The young ruler, after being directed to keep the commandments, animated with the presumptuous hope that he had already given all that obedience which was required, and that he would now receive the approbation he expected, asked "Which?" Christ answered, "Thou shalt do no murder," &c. This reply and that immediately preceding, "If thou wilt enter into eternal life," &c., has been adduced as proof that the Lord Jesus here directs us to our own personal obedience to the moral law as the ground of our justification; thus rejecting the doctrine that our justification is "only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone." Against this notion we think the following objection decisive. As the ruler required not merely a general rule of obedience, but a rule which would specify those distinct duties which lead to the inheritance of eternal life; if Christ had intended to prescribe to him a rule, the observance of which would secure this end, he surely would have comprised and distinctly specified at least the *capital parts* of moral duty. He, however, mentions no commandments but such as are found in the Second Table of the law—no other but those which require love to our neighbor. In the whole enumeration given, there is not mentioned one commandment found in the First Table—not one requiring love to God. Now can any one imagine, that Christ would specify duties, by the performance of which we can earn the inheritance of eternal life, and yet leave out in the specification every thing which requires love to God? If our justification depend in any measure upon our own obedience, does our love to God form no part of this obedience? Does not love to God form a principal and indispensable part of all obedience that is true and evangelical? If so, it is most

absurd to maintain, that Christ here prescribes a rule, by the observance of which eternal life is to become ours.

Something else must then be the Savior's meaning; and to discover what it is, we must remember whom he here addressed. This ruler was one of those self-righteous sinners, who, notwithstanding the Scripture declares "there is not a just man upon earth, who doeth good and sinneth not," and also, "by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified," yet believe that they can and do yield perfect obedience to God's law—can and do fill up every requirement which is contained in this rule of righteousness. That such was the state of the ruler's mind is evident from his answer, "All these things have I kept from my youth up." His understanding seems to have been so darkened, and his conscience so blinded, that he was totally unconscious of guilt in transgressing this part of the divine law. Christ dealt with him most wisely and faithfully. Men must be beaten out of error before they will betake themselves to the truth. A sinner must be brought to see the insufficiency of his own righteousness, before he will accept of the righteousness of the Redeemer. To teach this self-righteous man the insufficiency of his own righteousness, is the design of Christ in this part of the passage. And he does it most effectually. To leave him without the possibility of evasion—without the shadow of excuse, the Redeemer met him on that very ground on which he imagined he was most able to defend himself. He examined him on the reality and truth of his obedience to that part of the law which requires love to man. For it is much easier for unsanctified men to exhibit in their conduct something which resembles true love to man, than any thing which resembles love to God. The latter never is possessed, nor is it easy to exhibit even the appearance of it, until we are reconciled to him through the blood of the cross. But as regard to the peace of civil society, the habits of polite education and other things may conspire to produce in unsanctified men a conduct that resembles the former. Accordingly when the ruler declares "all these things have I kept from my youth up,"—as if he had said, I have, even from my youth till now, lived in an undeviating observance of all this part of the rule of duty;—Christ, to convince him of his mistake, replies, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me."—Our Savior's design and meaning in this reply may be thus

explained: You would persuade yourself that you have yielded perfect obedience to that part of my law which requires love to man. This belief arises from an utter mistake as to the spirituality and extent of my righteous law. You fail in that very point which lies at the foundation of all true obedience, an enlightened, conscientious regard to the authority of God. What has been your motive in keeping these commandments? Have you acted merely from expediency—because you found an honest behavior would enhance your interest among men? Or have you acted from a tender and conscientious regard to the authority of God, who requires these things. Without this, your obedience has not been perfect. And if this has been your motive, I require you now to give a proof of it. As I am God, I will give you a command, to prove how far my authority has influenced your obedience—a command, which, though not binding on every man,* is as binding on those to whom I give it, as if it formed part of that rule of duty which you boast that you have kept. This is a time when they who possess the world, should be as though they possessed it not. Judgments are soon to overtake this land, which will drive its present possessors from their places, and fill the land with confusion and blood. The duties in which I am about to employ my *Disciples* are incompatible with the possession of houses and lands. They are to travel from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, to proclaim my name. My authority calls them to work, and my strength shall fit them for it. I will provide for their necessities. Looking out for the inheritance of heaven, go and sell your possessions, give the price of them to the poor, come, take up your cross, by which the world shall be crucified unto you, and you unto the world, and follow me. If a regard to the authority of God has produced the obedience which you say you have rendered, you will readily consent to this requirement; while

* The command, "Go and sell what thou hast, and give to the poor," has been unwarrantably plead in proof of the foolish notion of "*a community of goods*," entertained and acted on by Moravians, Shaking Quakers, Mormons, &c. It was not merely *community of goods*, but a *total alienation* of them that was enjoined on the ruler. Neither does the command enjoin upon christians generally an utter *abandonment* of their property. They are required indeed to subordinate it, and all other earthly things to Christ, in their affections and attachments; and be willing to part with all for his sake whenever, and however he may require it of them. But to enforce a general and utter *abandonment* of goods, friends, &c. upon christians, from this special command of Christ given to this self-righteous ruler, is as contrary to the spirit of the gospel, as an undue attachment to the things of the world.

a refusal will shew that you have been and are still laboring under that ruinous mistake, which confounds the conduct of a generous hearted man, or the obedience of the mere legalist, or the specious pretences of the hypocrite, with that evangelical obedience, which flows from a heart formed and governed by the purifying grace of God.

The effect of this reply of Christ was powerful, awful and instantaneous. Disappointed and vexed, a sudden gloom covers the ruler's face ; silence seals his lips : "he went away sorrowful." The obedience of the gospel was too high for his reach, and going away to enjoy his possessions, he forsook the Redeemer who had offered to him eternal life.—Alas ! how many follow his example, refusing to give up with the honors, profits and enjoyments of this sinful world, tho' the crown of glory—life eternal, is offered to them in the Gospel. Reader, how is this with you ?

BEARINGS OF THE DISTINCTIVE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMED
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The following article, from the Scottish Presbyterian, will be perused, we doubt not, with interest by most of our readers. Its full title in that work is, "*On the bearings of the Distinctive Principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, on the present state and prospects of civil and ecclesiastical Society.*" The writer might have given a larger number of principles, that are truly distinctive of our church ; but he has framed his propositions so as to comprehend a very great deal in few specifications ; and the reader, with a little attention, will easily sub-divide them, especially the *Fourth*, so as to make them exhibit a large amount of doctrinal and practical truth held exclusively by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and forming the distinctive part of the Testimony of the Witnesses of Christ in the present age.

Though the article was written with special reference to the state of civil and ecclesiastical society in Scotland, most of it is equally applicable, with a little variation in the application of its sentiments, to the condition of things in this country. Probably the writer calculates too largely on the advantages to be derived from the acquisition of power by the *people*. The United States furnishes a mournful illustration of the truth, that society both civilly and ecclesiastically may

be in a lamentably bad state, where the *people* have the power in their own hands. Here a grossly immoral civil government has been set up by the people; immoral men, very generally, have administered and do administer the affairs of the nation; wicked men, in most instances, occupy the high places in the different departments of government; while pure and undefiled religion is almost buried beneath the mass of abounding corruption. And the "*people* love to have it so." Still we believe that the barriers mentioned must all be removed before Britain will return to her covenanted allegiance to the Ruler of the nations.—*Ed. Ref. Pres.*

The diversity of opinion among the various sections of the Church in this country, is so great, that though it would be an easy matter to point out the principles by which Reformed Presbyterians are distinguished from each party, taken individually, it is quite a different thing to fix upon the precise points in which they differ from *all other* parties in the religious world. Perhaps the following may be regarded as the most prominent:—

I. The universal moral supremacy of Christ as Mediator. Included in this, and illustrative of its practical bearings, it is maintained,

II. That the revealed will of the Mediator is the only standard of civil polity.

III. That the national covenants founded upon the revealed will of the Mediator are perpetually binding on the nation.

IV. That Christians ought to stand aloof from all civil governments, that are inconsistent with the Mediator's moral supremacy, with the infallible requirements of his will, and with the divinely warranted national covenant engagements.

But even these points cannot be all regarded as peculiarly distinctive. The Established Church of Scotland will scarcely deny, in doctrine, the universal moral supremacy of the Mediator. The Original Seceders maintain the perpetual obligation of the Covenants, at least upon the Church; and many Presbyterians may be found, who will not positively object to the Bible being taken as the standard of civil polity. We are not aware, however, that any religious party, besides the Reformed Presbyterian Church, holds the fourth mentioned principle, viz., that Christians ought to stand aloof from all civil governments that are unscriptural and immoral, in their nature and operations. The other principles are,

however, in point of fact, distinctive, in as much as no other denomination of christians acts in consistency with them.

The prospects of civil and ecclesiastical society, as gathered from existing circumstances, are none of the brightest. The rule of ancient feudal despotism seems to be fast hastening to a close ; the absurdities of hereditary dominion, irrespective of qualification for rule, are becoming more openly and more extensively the objects of popular detestation. If this had been the effect of scriptural illumination, and if there had been any tendency in the principles which seem now to be gaining the ascendancy, to establish a better order of things, it were well. It is not Scriptural principle, however, but infidelity that is sapping the foundations of the long-established system of lordly dominion ; it is infidelity that is now erecting the batteries against the time-worn bulwarks which ignorance and superstition reared in days of old ; and Satan's kingdom presents the spectacle of a "kingdom divided against itself." The political field is the scene of desperate strife, between the domination of usurped oligarchical supremacy, and the infidel liberty of the people, the falsely imagined natural rights of man. The predominance of either party affords but little prospect of amelioration. Both parties refuse to submit to the righteous government of the Prince of the kings of the earth ; both refuse to conform their political conduct to the infallible dictates of infinite wisdom ; both reject with abhorrence, the idea that a national engagement to the Lord can be perpetually binding ; and since this is the case, there is no reason at present existing, for the faithful witnesses of Christ uniting with either party, in a league of amity and friendship.

Let us look at the state of ecclesiastical society. It is rent with divisions ; it is a scene of restless turbulence. In Scotland, a large proportion of the professors of religion, seem to be ranged under the banners of two grand contending parties. The government church was established in error, and for a century and a half its deformities have increased rather than diminished. Its corruptions have alienated from its communion no small proportion of the religious public ; and now the greater part of these, having their eyes opened to the existing abuses of the establishment, and perseveringly blind to the radical defects of the civil constitution, have adopted the unwarrantable sentiment, that no connection should ever subsist between a civil and an ecclesiastical society. Strange

anomaly ! that the same persons should constitute both, and yet that no connection should ever subsist between them. Both these contending parties are in error, and both are under the influence of the same spirits which gather the political combatants to the battle. The present ecclesiastical establishment is corrupted, grievously corrupted, and will never be purified so long as it is connected with the unrighteous system of political government. The regal prerogatives of the Head of the Church are trampled on by the usurped supremacy of the civil powers ; and the purity of the Church is almost unavoidably destroyed, by the state of dependence in which her officers are held by the civil government and its underlings. Until the existing unrighteous connection between Church and State be broken off, or until the disgusting lineaments of anti-christianism be effaced from both the political and ecclesiastical constitutions, no fellowship must be held with the modern Church of Scotland.

But the *voluntary* is nothing better, than his derided brother of the Establishment. He wishes the existing connection between Church and State to be abolished ; and if the State cannot be reformed, so would we, for the Church could never be purified otherwise. But will he admit the authority of the Mediator over political societies ? No. Will he endeavor to remodel the civil constitution according to the laws of Christ ? No. The Bible has nothing to do with politics ! Will he admit that the national covenant engagements are still obligatory ? and will he endeavor to carry these engagements into effect ? No. The very idea of it affords him a fund of ridicule. Since he is so clamorous for the disconnection of Church and State, will he, as a church member, and a faithful subject of Christ, disconnect himself also from the heterogeneous political association ? No. Though Jezebel herself should fill the throne, with godless devotees of reason for her counsellors ; though Rome should fill the courts of justice with inquisitorial fathers, and though the blood-stained Moslem should command the army, still he must claim the privileges of citizenship, which his governors allow him to retain, and be a *voluntary* subject. And never must he attempt to exclude from power, a single individual because of his religious creed, or because he has none ; for "creeds rest only between man and his Maker." There must be no partiality, he tells us ; every one must be allowed his natural rights. And we are quite willing to allow to

all their natural rights, provided our wise friend would show us clearly what they are. But all natural rights have been long since forfeited, and it is only through the blood of the everlasting covenant, that all privileges flow to man. And how can they claim privileges who trample under foot the Son of God, who deride the mysteries of redemption, who set at nought the counsel of omniscience, and serve the depraved passions of their own hearts? Surely it is not right to be united in the bonds of fellowship with voluntaries.

What then must be done? Existing establishments are corrupted; proposed amendments are unlawful. Let us watch the aspect of the times and wait with patience. The attachment of the old reformers to hereditary monarchy, ruined the fair fabric of civil and religious polity, which they had reared. Infidelity has discovered the blemish, and is in process of removing from the minds of men, their devotion to this obnoxious bauble; and of withering the roots of feudal domination, that have been set deep in the social institutions of the country. Infidelity itself is bad; the means by which its votaries act are bad; the end they have in view is bad; but may we not hope, that He who "from seeming evil still educes good," will make even infidelity to serve him? May we not hope, that infidelity by wresting the power from the few, and committing it into the hands of the many, is paving the way for the triumph of the truth? In the times of the Reformation, the power was in a great measure in the hands of the nobles; and it was the nobles that were chiefly instrumental in carrying forward the work. But now it is probable, that if ever a Reformation be again effected in our civil and ecclesiastical constitutions, the people will have the honor of instrumentally effecting it. And on the supposition that a similar train of events will succeed to what have already taken place, may we be permitted to conjecture the probable result? When the people have once obtained the chief command of the affairs of the kingdom, there will then be no rival power to usurp the prerogatives of Zion's king; there will then be no temptation, except in the unbelief of the heart, to deny the universal moral supremacy of the Mediator; there will then be no resistance, except in the unsanctified disposition of the multitude, to the heavenly politics of the Scripture being carried into effect; and there will then be no host of anti-christian Prelates, with a popish or prelat-ical monarch at their head, to spurn the obligation of the na-

tional covenant engagements, the once glorious platform of the British constitution. There will, in short, be no *organized* opposition to the peculiar principles of the Reformation. Worldly wisdom is unable to effect the change; unaided human eloquence will never carry to the hearts of the multitude a conviction of the truth and the excellency of these principles; but neither will it persuade the world of the truth and excellency of the other doctrines of redemption. But when these principles continue to be resounded in their ears, and when the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord are come, and the Spirit of God is poured out upon all flesh, the glorious revolution will be accomplished; and it will then be indeed an honor and a privilege for Christians to be enrolled as citizens of the empire; and the connection between Church and State will then be safe, and salutary, and inseparable.

And are there no peculiar reasons for believing, that the doctrine of the universal supremacy of the Mediator, will yet be acknowledged and acted upon, in the civil and ecclesiastical constitutions of the British nation? Yes, there is a covenant between the Lord and the people. The nation in its pride and folly has disowned the ennobling engagement, but God remains faithful. In days of old the nation of Israel broke the covenant of their God, yet he promises, that notwithstanding their disobedience and rebellion, he will yet remember the covenant which he made with their fathers; and may we not indulge the pleasing expectation, that God will yet remember his covenant with Britain, and make his name glorious in the land.

MELCHISEDEC.

There is often an outcry against the obscurity of parts of the Holy Scriptures, when for the charge there would not be the least foundation, if the object of the inspired writers was kept steadily in view. The complaint arises, in many cases, from the difficulty of reconciling Scripture language to a sense in which it was never meant to be understood. Paul's account of Melchisedec, in Heb. vii. is precisely in this situation. What manner of man is this, say inquirers, that has neither father nor mother, beginning of days nor end of life?

The conclusion is, he can be no man at all. He must be superhuman. To bring to view, and obviate the many various opinions entertained of Melchisedec, would require a lengthy communication. This is not intended, but only a very brief view of the subject.

The object of the Apostle evidently is to bring Melchisedec to view as a *priest*, and not as a *man* at all. The overlooking of this consideration has led to all the difficulty and misconception concerning this illustrious personage. The design of the inspired writer is to contrast Melchisedec with the Aaronical priests, and to show that as Christ was of the order of the former and not of the latter, He was superior to that order in which the Jews so much gloried. When Melchisedec is said to be without father and without mother, all that is intended is, that his descent was not of priestly parents, as that of the priests of Aaron was: for the priesthood of this order was hereditary, being transmitted from father to son, if not prevented by natural or moral impediments. Not so Melchisedec, who was "without descent," that is, none to succeed him in office; in which respect, as well as in others, he was an eminent type of Christ. Again, of Melchisedec it is said, "he had neither beginning of days nor end of life." There is here a direct reference to the priests of the Aaronical order, who were to begin to officiate at the age of thirty, and desist at the age of fifty. See Num. iv. But to no such law was Melchisedec subjected. He was to continue to officiate in the sacerdotal office as long as health and life would permit. In so doing he was the more illustrious type of Christ, who ever lives in the exercise of his priestly office; therefore he is said to have an unchangeable priesthood. As Melchisedec's priesthood originated and terminated in himself, having neither predecessor nor successor in office, he much more directly typified our Lord, as the ever living High Priest of our profession, than did the priests of Aaron, whose incumbancy in office was limited to the short period of twenty years.

Any who would wish to see the points of resemblance between Christ and Melchisedec more largely discussed, may consult McKnight on the Seventh Chapter of Hebrews, who, though an Arminian writer, is on this subject luminous and accurate.

J.

EIGHT REASONS AGAINST UNIVERSALISM.

1. It does violence to the Holy Scriptures, and perverts the plain and obvious meaning of numerous passages which speak of the future punishment of impenitent sinners. And if in one case we may thus set aside the express and repeated declarations of God, to accommodate the doctrines to our own reason or inclinations, the volume of inspiration is dishonored and rendered useless, for upon these principles we may reject every fundamental truth of the Bible. If the doctrine of future punishment be not taught in the Bible, neither is the doctrine of future happiness; for they are commonly inculcated in the same passages, and in similar language.

2. If it be true that sin is not punished in the future world, then it would follow that God exercises no moral government over the world; for in the present life the wicked often live at ease and are prosperous, and the virtuous are afflicted. This doctrine goes far to annihilate all difference between virtue and vice; for we must judge of these according to the treatment they respectively receive from the Supreme Ruler; but if there be no future punishment, there is no strong mark of disapprobation set on vice. A doctrine which involves such a consequence as this must be false and dangerous.

3. If this doctrine should become general, *human society could not exist*. Like atheism to which it is near akin, its malignant tendency is not fully seen, while society at large is under the influence of a contrary belief. But take away from all men the fear of judgment and eternity, and this world becomes a scene of violence—an aceldama. All confidence among men would be destroyed; all the bonds of civil society would be severed. Do not say that vice might be coerced by the civil law—a vain hope. Where the whole mass are corrupt laws are useless. What means of ascertaining the truth in courts of justice will remain, if no man fears the consequence of perjury? Suppose a man who has no fear of judgment, to be solemnly called upon to declare the truth in a case where his own honor and interest, or that of some friend, is at stake—what is there to prevent him from perjuring himself? Or if he can gratify secret malice, by swearing against the life of an enemy, what shall restrain him? He may rea-

son with himself thus : 'I know this is a wicked act, but it will serve my purpose, it will enable me to gratify my revenge ; and I have nothing to fear. Detection here is impossible, and hereafter I am sure of heaven, do as I will.'—What security should we have that our food and medicine would not be mingled with poison in every house ? The men who propagate such doctrines are manifestly pursuing a course destructive to the peace and good order of society. I would fully as soon have an Atheist to bear witness against me on oath, or to sit in judgment as a juror, as one of these new fangled Universalists.

4. If there is no future punishment, the wicked who are driven away in their wickedness are happier than the righteous who are preserved to suffer. The wicked antediluvians who perished in the flood, had a better portion and a richer reward than Noah, for they all escaped the troubles of life and went to heaven, while Noah and his family were subjected to innumerable hardships for some hundreds of years. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were better off, though they were destroyed by fire from heaven, than righteous Lot, who escaped ; for they were released at once from all pain and sorrow, but his afflictions were many.—The wicked Canaanites were too bad to live upon earth, and therefore God enjoined it upon Joshua to extirpate them ; but not too bad to be admitted at once to heaven without any repentance or sanctification ! Their lot was, therefore, greatly preferable to that of the Israelites, who endured many toils and sufferings. Upon this theory Judas was rather benefited than injured, by his base and ungrateful crime of betraying his Lord, and by his suicide. Indeed if there be no future punishment, and the next world be better than this, not only will suicide be innocent and beneficial, but there can be no great harm in murder. It only ushers a fellow creature into superior bliss a little earlier than if he were left to die a natural death.

5. Upon the supposition that this doctrine is true, repentance is useless ; neither is there any need of sanctification. Heaven is the sinner's right without any condition or preparation. How the ungodly will be pleased with the place and its exercises, is another question. Whether dying will take away their disrelish for devotional exercises is not explained. But there is no need of undergoing the sorrows of repentance for sin.—This the Universalists acknowledge.—

A writer before referred to declares, 'that there is not the least occasion for solicitude about salvation, neither is it in our power to procure or hinder it.' We did suppose that the advocates of this doctrine would have pleaded for repentance, which is nothing else but a turning from sin to God, as useful to prevent evil in this life ; but we find that we mistook their views, for the same writer asserts, concerning the evils that sin produces here, 'that these consequences are inevitable and cannot be escaped, even by repentance.' What these men can preach, or why they should preach at all, we do not see.

6. Upon this theory there is no need of religion of any kind ; no connexion exists between religion and salvation ; no difference between the man who loves and serves God, and him who hates him and despises his service. Atheism is as good as piety ; idolatry and heresy as safe a way to heaven as truth and righteousness. The one thing needful is, to be fully persuaded that nothing is needful. If men are only informed that there will be no future reckoning, no condemnation of the wicked, no future punishment, they need know nothing else ; and whether they believe it or not, all are in the safe way to heaven. We presume that the principal preaching of Universalists is on the single point, that the wicked have nothing to fear on account of their sins : for why should they disturb their hearers about believing or doing other things ? But the benefits of this system will, in the future world, be as fully enjoyed by those who oppose the doctrine, as by those who believe and preach it.

7. This doctrine encourages men to continue in sin, by *removing all fear of future judgment and punishment*. In this respect its tendency is as bad as atheism itself ; for the most impious denial of a Divine Being cannot promise more to its foolish votaries than exemption from judgment and future punishment. This species of Universalism is fraught with the very worst poison of atheism. It tells the sinner that let him act as wickedly as he will, or as he can, there is no fear of future misery. Indeed, it is in some respects worse than atheism, for it not only promises exemption from punishment but the reward of eternal happiness to the impenitent sinner. It says to the atrocious murderer and cruel assassin, 'You need fear no evil hereafter ; though you should die in the commission of the foulest deeds, heaven with all its glory and happiness, is yours.' Is not this shocking to every honest mind ? and what must the effect be on profane, cruel, and a-

bandoned profligates ! How pernicious its influence in the hour of temptation ! Suppose an inexperienced youth in a place of trust to have imbibed this doctrine. An opportunity occurs of defrauding his employer of a vast sum of money, with the prospect of escaping detection. Well, what shall hinder him from enriching himself at once ? If the belief of a future judgment were now to rise in his mind, he would be ready, like Joseph, to say, '*How can I do this great evil and sin against God ?*' But having no apprehension of any judgment to come, and sure of heaven, let him do what he will, he is led into temptation and is deprived of every consideration which would lead him to resist it. Even the faint hope that there is no future punishment, has a powerful effect in leading corrupt men to commit atrocious crimes although this hope is contrary to all that they have ever been taught ; but who can calculate the influence of a persuasion that there is no future punishment for the greatest crimes, derived from men who pretend to be preachers of the gospel ? Doubtless a large portion of the most abominable crimes that ever were perpetrated, owe their existence to a secret belief or hope of the truth of the very doctrine which Universalists preach.

8. It is a horrible consequence of this doctrine, that it puts it in the power of the sinner to *set God himself at defiance with impunity*. The malignant, ungrateful wretch, instead of praising, may blaspheme the great Jehovah every day of his life, and may die with horrid blasphemies on his lips, and yet he shall be rewarded with everlasting happiness ! Indeed, as all the punishment of sin is supposed to be in this life, when a sinner commits some horrible crime in the last moments of his life, as in a late case where a man first shot an innocent person and then blew out his own brains, where or how will he receive his due punishment ? His death is but the pang of a moment, and if there be no retribution for such crimes in the government of God, it cannot be believed that he is a righteous moral Governor.—DR. ALEXANDER.

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

(From the Covenanter.)

The celebrated Convention of Divines, at Westminster, met, by appointment of Parliament, on the 1st of July, 1643,

and continued to meet, with more or less regularity, till the 22d of February, 1648; having held eleven hundred and sixty-three Sessions during that time.* Although it did not accomplish all that might at first have been expected, or that could be desired, yet did it enjoy signal tokens of the countenance of the Church's glorious Head; and the fruits of its labors will long remain a lasting monument of the piety, ability, and zeal for the advancement of divine truth, which characterized its members. As the different subjects that engaged their attention are but imperfectly known, we shall present as full a sketch of them as our limits will permit, collected from various authentic sources, some of which are not accessible to many of our readers.

For upwards of *two months* after the commencement of the Assembly, the Divines were chiefly occupied with the work of altering and modifying the Articles of the Church of England, a service which proved of little practical utility to the Church, and which was laid aside, when they had proceeded as far as the fifteenth. The diligence, activity, extensive theological attainments and experience of the Scottish Commissioners, proved of the utmost advantage to the Assembly: their presence added new life to its deliberations; and most of the great important measures which came under discussion, were either projected by Henderson and his fellows, or were brought to a conclusion through their instrumentality.

Even from the first, the differences between the various parties in the State, and in the Assembly, tended greatly to impede the business, and to prevent matters from being bro't to a speedy and comfortable issue. The majorities in both Houses of Parliament were *moderate Episcopalians*, who venerated Episcopacy for its antiquity and usefulness; but not considering it absolutely necessary to the existence of true religion, they were willing to modify, but not to abolish it.—In the House of Commons were a few *Independents*, and in the Assembly were a larger proportion,† whose object was

* See Orme's Life of Owen—Works, Vol. I. p. 53.

†The number of professed Independents in the Westminster Assembly did not exceed *ten or twelve*; but they were in alliance with a political party, headed by Vane and Cromwell, which, by means of much artifice and dissimulation, obtained the command of the army—abolished the House of Lords—purged the Commons, and turned them out of doors—put to death the King—abolished Episcopacy—subdued Scotland, and marched the Moderator and whole General Assembly from the Assembly House out to Bruntsfield Links, where Colonel Cotterel, from

to retard every thing, till they could procure toleration for their separate Congregations. With these were joined the *Anabaptists* and *Erastians*, who asserted that the pastoral office was only persuasive ; that sealing ordinances should be free to all ; and that the power of inflicting ecclesiastical censure pertained to the Civil Magistrate alone. There were, besides, a class of men, who were averse to all ecclesiastical discipline and order, by whomsoever administered, and who joined the opposition to monarchy and prelacy, solely with the design of enriching themselves in the general confusion, and of obtaining, for themselves, unbounded license in following evil courses. Having to do with men of such heterogeneous principles, or rather with such combined opposition to the truth, it is rather to be wondered at, that those who were in heart and affection devoted to the principles of the Solemn League and Covenant effected so much, than that there remained a few important points of Covenanted Uniformity, which they failed to establish.

The first subject on which the Independents and Presbyterians came into collision respected the office of Pastors and Doctors, or Teachers. The Divines had taken up this point before the arrival of the Scottish Commissioners, but had not brought it to a conclusion. The Independents argued for the divine institution of a Doctor in every Congregation, as well as a Pastor ; while the Presbyterians insisted on the simple identity of Pastors and Doctors. Henderson took a moderate course, and, by means of a healing overture, which he referred to a Committee of Accommodation, the Assembly was brought to a unanimous agreement on six propositions, in which, though the absolute necessity of a Doctor in each Congregation, and the divine right of the office were refused, it was declared, that, in Congregations where two Ministers could be had, according to their respective gifts, the one should be allowed, as a Doctor, to teach, and the other, as a Pastor, to preach.*

The office of "*Ruling Elder*" afforded scope for more lengthened discussion. Baillie says—"Many a brave dis-

the head of his troop of dragoons, gave the Covenanters the word of command to "convene their Assemblies no more." (See Aiton's life of Henderson, p. 526. 527.) So much have men of anarchial principles, through activity and unanimity, been able to effect in times of public excitement !

* Baillie's Letters, Vol. I. p. 401 : Aiton's Life of Henderson, p. 532.

pute have we had upon it for these ten days." The English Divines had enjoyed no opportunities previously of witnessing the inestimable advantage of a proper eldership ; and hence, in the Assembly, besides the Independents, several of the ablest Presbyterians argued directly against the divine institution of the Elder's office. Smith, Temple, Gattaker, Vines, Price, and Hall, were principal speakers in the opposition ; while Seaman, Walker, Marshall, Newcoman, Young, and Calamy, reasoned powerfully in its favor. All were willing to admit of Elders as a matter of prudential order ; but the Presbyterians, regarding this as "most dangerous and unhappy," peremptorily rejected it, and insisted on a simple declaration of the divine right of Ruling Elders. To reconcile parties, a Committee was appointed. By this measure, a happy agreement was effected, and it was unanimously determined—That, besides Ministers of the Word, there should be, according to the Scriptures, ordained Elders and perpetual Deacons.†

The ordination of Ministers formed another principal subject of debate. The Bishops, being almost without exception in the King's interest, refused to ordain any but those who were of their own party ; and Baillie, speaking of the views entertained at this time in England, in relation to ecclesiastical order, says—"As yet, a Presbytery to this people is conceived a strange monster." A measure adapted to the then pressing emergency, was proposed as a temporary provision, that, until a uniform order should be adopted, certain Ministers in London should be appointed as a Court, to ordain Ministers. Against this the Independents objected, unless the ordination was preceded by election to a particular Congregation. The city Ministers, who were generally firm Presbyterians,‡ about this time supplicated the Assembly, bewailing the anarchy of the Church, and the increase of Antinomians, Anabaptists, and other sectaries, and their collecting separate Congregations ; and requesting the As-

† Baillie's Letters, Vol. I. p. 407. In bringing about this conclusion, the Scottish Commissioners had a main hand. Thus Baillie speaks of his compeers :—"None in all the company did reason more, and more pertinently, than Mr. Gillespie, That is an excellent youth ; my heart blesses God in his behalf. For Mr. Henderson and Mr. Rutherford, all the world knows their graces."

‡ Of 121 Ministers at that time in London, not *three* were Independents. —Baillie's Letters, 95, p. 102. Vol. II.

sembly to intercede with the Parliament, to furnish a speedy remedy for these evils, to prepare a Directory for public worship, and to erect a College in London, for the education of the youth, whose studies had been interrupted at Oxford.— These proposals were well received by the Assembly, and, through the influence of the Scottish Commissioners, the matter was strongly urged upon the attention of Parliament. In consequence, the two Houses passed an ordinance for the ordination of Ministers, authorizing a Committee of the Assembly to examine and ordain *pro tempore*, by imposition of hands, all whom they should judge qualified for the ministry. It was further ordained, that no Minister should be allowed to preach, unless he had a certificate of his ordination, or at least of his having been examined and approved by the Assembly. The Divines manifested a diligence in this affair, proportioned to its paramount importance. A Committee met in the Assembly House almost every morning, for the trial of expectants. After hearing them preach, and examining them, they gave in to the Assembly a certificate of their qualifications ; after which, they were sent to supply vacant Congregations, but without ordination.

One of the chief steps to uniformity, which Henderson and the other Commissioners so earnestly desired to have established, was next proposed, and after some preliminary arrangements, was carried with much cordiality. This was the abolition of the Service-Book, and the adoption of the Directory for worship, framed chiefly in accordance with the practice of the Church of Scotland. The matter was referred to the Committee of Preparation, and approved of by Vane and Lords Say and Wharton. A Sub-Committee of *five* was appointed to confer with the Scottish Commissioners for preparing the Directory, which was to be communicated to the Great Committee of Preparation, and by them to the Assembly. The Directory thus prepared, passed the Assembly with much unanimity ; and throughout the Church it met with a very favorable reception, even from parties of different views. Such as were for set forms of prayer, of whom there were a few, resolved to confine themselves to the very words of the Directory ; while those averse to a Liturgy, made use of the words only as certain heads on which they might enlarge. There can be no question that this latter use alone was contemplated by the framers. The Parliament sanctioned the Directory by public enactment, and, the fol-

lowing summer, called in and prohibited all Common-Prayer Books, and ordained all their Ministers to read the Directory publicly, in their Congregations, before morning service.— Thus was Presbyterian order in worship established by public authority; and although Charles, still implicitly guided by the Bishops, forbid the use of the Directory by proclamation, it continued to be generally followed throughout England and Wales, till the Restoration, when the Old Liturgy was restored.*

About this time, the Scottish Commissioners displayed a laudable zeal against popish festivals, and superstitious practices. Henderson, at the instance of Baillie, proposed that, in order to discountenance superstition, the Assembly should meet on the Christmas holidays, as on other days; many of the members concurred in the propriety of this course; but the majority resolved to preach on that day, as formerly, till the Parliament should reform it in an orderly way. The Commissioners had more influence with the parliament.— Christmas day happened to fall on the day of the monthly fast; after a debate, it was determined, by both Lords and

* The necessity and advantage of a general Directory in religious worship, appeared evident, from the discordant opinions and practices of the members of the Assembly themselves. In and about London, at this period, many Ministers of most note were accustomed to pray and read, in the desk, on the Sabbath morning, *four* chapters of the Scriptures, explain a portion of them, cause *two* psalms to be sung, and then to go to the pulpit and preach. Some of the leading Independents argued stoutly against all Directories; and seem, from their recorded opinions and practices, to have entertained little idea of any decent and regular order. They thought that, in preaching, the Minister should be covered, and the people uncovered, but that, in the Sacrament, the Minister should be uncovered, and the people all covered. They generally observed the Sacrament of the Supper in their Churches on Sabbath morning, without any preparation before, or thanksgiving after it; there was little examination of candidates for communion, and their prayers and doctrine before the Sacrament had no special reference to the ordinance. "They have," says Baillie, "after the blessing, a short discourse, and two graces over the elements, which are distributed and partaken of in silence, without exhortation, reading, or singing; and all is ended with a psalm, without prayer." The Independents contended strongly against the use of a table, in administering the Lord's Supper, and pressed that all should communicate in their pews, without coming to a table. The dispute was at length compromised by the words, "sitting around it, or at it," being adopted. The General Assembly in Scotland, however, refused the compromise, and appended an explanation, adhering to the practice of sitting around the table.—*Baillie*, Vol. I. 440; Vol. II. 27, 31; Printed Acts, 1645.

Commons, that the Parliament should sit on that day, and that fasting and prayer better became the circumstances of the nation than feasting. Accordingly, Henderson and Calamy preached before the House of Commons. Henderson had the thanks of the House given him, and his sermon was printed by their order.*

Towards the close of the year, the celebrated treaty at Uxbridge, between the King and the Parliament was undertaken. Sixteen Commissioners were appointed on the part of the King, twelve from the Parliament, and four from the Scots, besides Mr. Henderson, who was to watch over the interests of the Church. In the preliminary arrangements, it was agreed, that the three principal subjects of consideration should be, Religion, the Militia, and Ireland, and three days were assigned to each. The discussions on the subject of religion alone, falling within the limits of this sketch, demand a brief notice. The Scottish and Parliamentary Commissioners were instructed not to treat about a reformation, but to demand the entire abolition of Episcopacy, the confirmation of the ordinance for indicting [calling] of the Westminster Assembly, and of the Directory for public worship, and to insist that Charles should take the Solemn League and Covenant.† Charles, through his Commissioners, alleged that he could not in conscience change Episcopacy, because of its antiquity and usefulness, and on account of his coronation oath, while he professed his willingness to rectify abuses; and, in point of policy, he said it was his duty to protect the Church, as he expected the Church to assist in maintaining the royal authority. The dispute on the article of Church Government was conducted, on the one side, by Dr. Stewart, clerk of the King's closet, and on the other, by Henderson and Marshall. Stewart claimed for Episcopacy, a *jus divinum*, and endeavored to prove that, without Bishops there could be no ordination of Ministers, or administration of Sacraments; he alleged, moreover, that foreign Churches had always revered the Church of England as the most perfect constitution; and pleaded that the King was bound, by his coronation oath, to maintain Prelacy in England. Henderson and Marshall denied that the foreign Protestants esteemed the prelatical form, and argued, that Presbyterian-

* Aiton's Life of Henderson, p. 542.

† Baillie's Letters, Vol. I. p. 411 : Aiton's Life of Henderson, p. 539.

ism had the sole claim to a Divine right. The subject was afterwards debated syllogistically between the disputants : —when it was taken up a second time, it was agreed that the views of both parties should be stated in writing. Accordingly, the King's Commissioners in their paper stated, that Charles absolutely refused to abolish Episcopacy, establish the Directory, confirm the appointment of the Assembly of Divines, or take the Covenant ; but for the sake of peace, he offered to suspend all legal penalties against non-conformists, to enjoin that religious ceremonies should be dispensed with, that Bishops exercise no act of jurisdiction or ordination, without the consent of the Presbytery, who shall be chosen by the Clergy of each diocese ; that Clergymen be bound to residence ; and that no man shall be capable of two livings, without care of souls : in addition, Charles offered to call a National Synod, in case the proposed alterations did not give satisfaction. The Parliamentary Commissioners, in reply, held by their original demand to abolish Episcopacy, and stated, that, as the terms were not consistent with that reformation by which both nations had bound themselves by the Solemn League and Covenant, they could not close with them. Both parties kept to their point, and the treaty was broken off.

Ere the negotiations closed, Laud, who had been a main adviser of the King in his obstinate and ill-fated course, was brought to trial, and suffered, on the scaffold, for the innocent blood which he had caused to be shed, through his infatuated perseverance in advancing Prelacy, in its worst forms of Popery and Arminianism, and in abetting the designs of arbitrary power.*

Before leaving Uxbridge, Henderson obtained a passport from the King to visit the Continent. It seems probable that he designed, by this mission, to enlist in favor of the Covenanted Reformation of the Protestant Churches of France, Geneva, Holland and Switzerland, and to bring them to uniformity in the principles of the Solemn League. The pressure of important business at home, however, prevented Henderson, who was admirably fitted for such a work, from accomplishing a purpose, whose execution would have been of essential benefit to the interests of the Reformed cause throughout the Continent of Europe.

* Aikman, Vol. IV. 174.

After his return to London, Henderson was for a time indisposed ; but by the end of the year he was restored, and was enabled to attend, with his usual activity and diligence, to public business.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTIAN PARADOXES.

[From a Magazine 100 years old.]

1. A Christian is one who believes many things which his reason cannot comprehend ; hopes for things he never saw ; and labours for what he does not get ; yet in the issue his belief appears not to be false, his hope makes him not ashamed, his labour is not in vain.

2. He believes three to be one, and one to be three ; a father not to be older than his son ; a son to be equal with his father, and one proceeding from both, to be equal with both : as believing three persons in one nature, and two natures in one person.

3. He believes the God of all grace to have been angry with one that never offended him ; and God who hates sin, to be reconciled with himself though sinning continually ; and never making or being able to make him satisfaction. He believes a most just God to have punished a most just person, and to have justified himself (the christian) though a most ungodly sinner ; he believes himself freely pardoned and yet a sufficient satisfaction was made for him.

4. He believes himself to be precious in God's sight ; and yet loathes himself in his own. He dares not justify himself even in those things in which he can find no fault with himself ; and yet believes God accepts him in those services wherein himself is able to find many faults.

5. He bears a lofty spirit in a mean condition, when he is ablest he thinks meanest of himself ; he is rich in poverty, and poor in the midst of riches. He believes all the world to be his, yet takes nothing without special leave from God ; he is often sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.

6. He lives not to himself, yet of all others he is most wise for himself. He denies himself often, yet no man loves himself better. He is most reproached, yet most honored. He has most afflictions, yet most comforts.

7. The more injury his enemies do him, the more advantages he gains by them. The more he forsakes worldly things, the more he enjoys them.

8. He is the most temperate of all men, yet fares most deliciously ; he lends and gives most freely, yet he is the greatest usurer ; he is meek towards all men, yet inexorable by men ; he loves all men as himself, yet hates some men with a perfect hatred.

9. He desires to have more than any other, yet is truly sorrowful when he sees any man have less than himself. He is a peacemaker, yet a continual fighter, and an irreconcilable enemy. He believes him to be worse than an infidel that provides not for his family, yet he lives and dies without care.

10. He is often in prison, yet always at liberty : a freeman, though a servant. He loves not honor among men, yet highly prizes a good name. He knows he shall not be saved by nor for his good works, yet does all the good works he can. He knows God's providence is in all things, yet is as diligent in his calling and business as if all depended on himself.

CHRONOLOGICAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE COVENANTED CHURCH OF
SCOTLAND.

A variety of circumstances conspired to preserve primitive christianity in Scotland, from Romish corruption for a long time after the other nations of Europe had generally sunk under the debasing power of Popish superstition. It was not till the eleventh century, perhaps, that the church in that country submitted entirely to the Papal dominion. And there is strong reason to presume that the pure and simple doctrines of christianity, unadulterated by antichristian superstition, were still preserved by a few faithful witnesses for the truth of Jesus scattered throughout the west of Scotland. These were called the Lollards of Kyle. From the fragments of the history of that dreary period which still remain, it appears that some of the Lollards of Kyle were sustained in bearing a testimony for the truth even unto death itself.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century the light of the reformation began to dawn upon Scotland : at this time the corruptions of Popery were distinctly perceived by a few choice spirits whom the Head of the church had raised up as instruments to maintain his testimony against the encroachments of Papal tyranny. Their conflict with the Romish apostacy proved singularly successful ; but, while the cause of truth

triumphed in their hands some of them were called to seal it with their blood.

Patrick Hamilton, a young man of noble birth, enjoyed the distinguished honor of being the proto-martyr of Scotland; he was burned on the last day of February, 1528, in the city of St. Andrews. But the flames in which he expired were "in the course of one generation, to enlighten all Scotland; and to consume with avenging fury the Catholic superstition, the papal power, and the prelacy itself."

About the year 1535 the attention of John Knox was directed to the study of the sacred writings in preference to the dogmas of popery. At this time he taught philosophy in the university of St. Andrews. In consequence of reading the works of Jerome and Augustine he was led to the Scriptures as the only pure fountain of Divine truth, and instructed in the utility of studying them in the original languages." In the Scriptures he learned the doctrines of Protestantism. But it was not till the year 1542 that he openly embraced them, and renounced popery. This exposed him to the malicious resentment of Cardinal Beaton, which rendered it impossible for him to remain with safety in St. Andrews. At this critical juncture, the reformer obtained the patronage "of the Laird of Langniddrie," to which providentially he was indebted for the preservation of his life from assassination by the Cardinal who had hired some ruffians for this purpose.

From the year 1540, till the end of 1542, reformation principles increased with great rapidity. During the course of this short period, according to one historian, there were not fewer than 360 noblemen and gentlemen, of considerable standing in society, who had embraced the doctrines of the reformed. The number as given by another historian is 340. These did not, till some time afterwards, however, publicly avow their principles by renouncing the apostacy of Rome.

On the 19th of March, 1543, the Scottish parliament passed an act which exerted great influence on the reformation and rapidly hastened the downfall of the man of sin. This act declared "That it shall be lawful to all men to read the Bible and Testament in the mother tongue." About this time, too, various works were published in the Scottish language, and others brought from England which, says Knox in his history, "disclosed the pride, the craft, the tyranny, and the abuse of the Roman Antichrist."

The cause of the reformation was much advanced by the labours of George Wishart, who, for the space of two years, exerted himself with great zeal preaching the truth in different parts of the country. He was distinguished for his persuasive eloquence, his uncommon piety, his meekness, prudence, charity and courage. He received the crown of martyrdom on the 1st of March, 1546.

Knox, upon whose shoulders had fallen the mantle of the martyred Wishart, and from whose ministrations he had reaped great benefit, now devoted himself entirely to the public ministrations of the gospel: previous to this they had been confined to the instruction of the family of Douglass of Langniddrie. He entered the Castle of St. Andrews

and, under the protection of those who held it in opposition to the popish party, had an opportunity of preaching the gospel. Many of the citizens, as well as those in the castle, enjoyed the advantage of the reformer's labors, renounced popery and made a profession of the protestant faith. In 1547, Knox administered the Lord's supper according to its scriptural institution. This was the first public administration of the ordinance since the commencement of the reformation. The career of the reformer so propitiously begun was interrupted for some time by the surrender of the Castle of St. Andrews. Those who held it were compelled to capitulate to a superior force; in violation of the terms of capitulation Knox and some others were sent on board of the French galleys. After an imprisonment of nineteen months on board of the galleys he obtained his liberty, but did not immediately return home: for several years following he laboured with great zeal in the reformation cause in England, in Geneva and Frankfort—in the latter city he had the pastoral charge of a congregation of English exiles. In 1555 he made a short visit to Scotland. During this visit, at a meeting held by a number of the most influential of the friends of reformation, the question of formal separation from the Romish apostacy was discussed. The arguments of Knox prevailed: and thus, says an eminent historian, "was a formal separation made from the popish church in Scotland, which may be justly regarded as an important step in the reformation." This meeting was held in Edinburgh, and it is presumed in the residence of the Laird of Dun: because Knox says expressly that he was invited to supper by the Laird; mentioning others also who were invited in view of the object stated above. A short time after this, at the family mansion of the same gentleman, in the shire of Angus, most of the neighboring gentlemen made a profession of the protestant faith and partook of the Lord's supper. At the same time they "entered into a solemn and mutual bond, in which they renounced the popish communion, and engaged to maintain the true preaching of the gospel, according as Providence should favor them with opportunities. This seems to have been the first of those religious bonds, or covenants, by which the confederation of the protestants in Scotland was so frequently ratified."

In the beginning of 1556 Knox accepted an invitation to take the pastoral charge of the English congregation in the city of Geneva, where he continued nearly two years—then returned to his own country, where he continued till his death, carrying on and establishing the reformation.

Before he took his departure, Knox gave such directions to his protestant brethren as he judged necessary; particularly in respect of mutual improvement when deprived of pastors. In a letter written after his departure "he advised that those belonging to different families should meet together, if possible, *once every week*" for social worship and religious conversation. This was the first attempt since the reformation to introduce the scriptural practice of fellowship meetings. And to this, in the good providence of God, we are indebted for the instructive and Godly practice of the brethren still enjoyed in social meetings.

THE DOMESTIC SLAVE TRADE.

The following statements, from the United States' Gazette of the 28th of Jan. last, though differing somewhat from the general character of the articles admitted to our pages, contain important and awfully interesting intelligence to which we presume many of our readers may not have access by other means of information. The facts stated should be known and wept over by every person in the community—every friend of the rights of God and man. The pecuniary embarrassments, and other distress exhibited, excepting that in which the poor victims of the merciless and sinful Domestic Slave trade have been and still are involved, should be regarded as a righteous retribution meted out to sinners by the hand of a just God, who will, we trust, soon arise to plead, in his own way, the cause of the poor and oppressed. The ways of Divine Providence have still been to inflict heavier judgments upon a sinning people, when lighter ones failed to make them see and acknowledge his hand lifted up in anger. For many years the language of this nation has been, "We will not see:" but the faithfulness of the Mediator, the Ruler of the nations, is pledged that "They shall see and be afraid."

What humbling and warning spectacles do the following statements present! In three years the slave population in Mississippi increased from 70,000 to 160,000, chiefly by human beings being driven in from the border states, like cattle to a market. Every corner of slave-holding states, whence victims of the atrocious traffic could be procured, ransacked! The public highways *literally crowded* with men and women laden with irons, like felons driven to punishment!! The brow of every hill, surrounding the villages and towns of the state, covered with slave tents, the wretched inmates of which were soon to be separated by the severing of the tenderest ties—husbands from wives, parents from children, relatives from relatives!!! And all this in a land of boasted Freedom, "*the home of the free, the asylum of the oppressed!*" While such scenes are enacting before the eyes of the nation, of the world, and in the sight of Heaven, Congress treats with insolence the loud and repeated calls made upon them from year to year by God and man, to interfere and, in the exercise of their constitutional power, put a stop to the domes-

tic slave trade, and the other evils of the iniquitous system, as far as they fall within their legislative sphere. Sellers and buyers continue the traffic. Hundreds of professing Christians hold as property and work without wages, their fellow men. Thousands professing the name of Christ apologize for slavery.

We have no sympathy for the degraded Negro-traders whose claims have been cut off by the decision of the Federal Court. We rejoice in the decision: but a question arises which should claim immediate attention. *By what right, natural, conventional or legal, are the thousands of slaves driven into Mississippi and sold since May 1833, held by their present owners?* It has been decided that "all contracts for slaves" since that time "are made null and void, the constitution forbidding the introduction of slaves for sale." If the claims of the seller have been all forfeited, we would like to know on what basis the title of the purchaser rests, and how he makes a title to future purchasers who may buy any of those persons whom it was unconstitutional to introduce, or their children and children's children, generation after generation.—ED.

In 1833, from September to December, there were several thousand slaves carried to, and sold in Mississippi. The success with which the traders met, induced a number of keen, enterprising young men to embark in that unfeeling traffic the succeeding fall. In the fall of 1834 the trade was tripled. The traders sold out, at fine profits, for bills on New Orleans at four months' time. Previously they had required cash in hand. The trade had now been universally profitable for two years.

The speculators from Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Missouri and Maryland, directed their attention to it, to the neglect of other important enterprises. In the fall of 1835, slaves, in great multitudes, were driven to the state, quadrupling any previous year. The demand abroad advanced the price.—The competition forced the traders to give from twelve to fifteen months' time, adding ten per cent. interest; but the prices advanced from \$700 to \$1000, and at the close of the sales to \$1200, average. So soon as the planter learned he could purchase on time, by bills on New Orleans, the advanced price ceased to be an objection, and he bought liberally. The traders now soon sold all they had, returned home with the accepted bills, cashed them in bank, and not only embarked in it again more largely themselves, but induced their friends and acquaintances also to engage in it. Every corner of the slaveholding states was now ransacked, and every dwelling visited by the trader. Prices advanced still higher and higher. The fall of 1836 is a time long to be remembered. All the public highways to Mississippi became lined

—yea literally crowded—with slaves. When they arrived, the immense number (swelling the rise of 40,000) made the callous hearts of all the traders ache. They pitched their tents upon the brow of every hill, surrounding each town and village in the state, awaiting the call of purchasers. None came. The winter of 1837 approached, and but few sales were yet effected. At last they advertised they would give one and two years time, by bills on New Orleans, adding ten per cent. interest discount.

The terms were accepted by the planters, and many were induced to purchase a second, and even a third supply at from \$1200 to \$1800 each. All the slaves were soon sold. But by this time the merchants began to give way. Nearly all the bills made by the planters in the fall of 1835 and spring of 1836, at from twelve to fifteen months' time, were protested for non-payment. The bills for the whole of the purchases in the winter of 1836 and spring of 1837 were protested for non-acceptance. The negro speculators became alarmed. They went to work in February and March, and in three months' time, had secured their debts by deeds in trust and mortgages upon nearly the whole property of the state. In 3 years, the slave population of Mississippi increased from 70,000 to 160,000 slaves! at an average cost of at least \$1000 each! making the debt for slaves alone, in three years, swell to \$90,000,000!! From 1833 to 1837, cotton bore an exorbitant high price. This, together with the increased force, induced the planter to direct all his energy to its cultivation; relying upon purchasing every article of consumption. He neglected to raise his own corn and pork; he had to purchase more mules, horses and ploughs, open more lands, and increase his bills with the merchants, whom he totally neglected to pay. When the crash came in May, 1837, all the paper held against the planter by the merchant, or nearly all, was transferred to the banks, or sued upon by the merchants. The crowd of business in the different Courts delayed judgment, and when judgment was at last obtained, the sheriffs and marshal could find nothing scarcely to levy upon. Bankruptcy and ruin among some of the merchants were inevitable; and in their fall they crushed the banks. The negro traders stood by with cold indifference, and beheld towns depopulated and large plantation after plantation laid waste, growing up with thorns and briars, without feeling one pang of remorse for the ruin and wretchedness they had brought upon the country; laughing at their own safety and security.

A change has taken place. By a late decision in the Federal Court at Jackson, it was decided that according to the amended constitution of Mississippi, which took place in the winter of 1832-33, all contracts for slaves since May, 1833, are made null and void, the constitution forbidding the introduction of slaves for sale. Two thirds of the present debt of the state is for slaves since May 1833.

THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

APRIL, 1840.

No. II.

CIVIL MAGISTRACY AS GOD'S ORDINANCE.

The following article is from the pen of a Layman, as the signature shows. In forwarding it, the writer says "I have a little piece, written in my own private exercises, which perhaps you may think proper to publish in our Reformed Presbyterian. I herewith send it to you, that you may make such a disposition of it as you may think proper." We insert the article with great pleasure, and recommend, not the reading, but the careful *study* of it, to all who wish to have an important subject brought before their minds in a plain, scriptural and forcible manner. The subject forms a part of "The present Truth," and should be more fully understood than it generally is by the great body of professing christians. The application of the truths stated, to the civil institutions of the United States, will hardly escape the attention of the reader, while the New-light controversy, in which the writer took an active and efficient part in the bounds of the congregation to which he belonged, will be recalled to remembrance by many of our readers. We request "A Layman" soon to write again, and solicit other *Laymen* in our church, many of whom are capable if they would, to furnish us with articles, on such doctrinal or practical subjects as they may deem useful to the readers of the Reformed Presbyterian.—ED.

"Hosea viii. 4. They have set up kings, but not by me; they have made princes, and I knew it not."

We should always endeavor to be of the same mind with God in relation to any matter, and then we will be sure to be right; and in order to find out and know the mind of God, we must consult his holy word in relation to every matter, and every duty. This we must do in a humble dependence on the Holy Spirit; and by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, without which we cannot understand the mind and will of

God, as contained in the holy scriptures; for the Spirit of promise is to lead us into the truth as it is in Jesus. This is the only way in which we can have correct or saving views,—*correct* in relation to our duty in every relation of life, and *saving* in relation to our own salvation. Christ is the sum and substance of the whole word of God; and without faith in him how is it possible we can understand the scriptures? Nor can we expect the teaching of the Holy Spirit in any other way; for he is the Spirit of Christ, and takes of the things of Christ, and shews them unto us. We are as dark as midnight darkness without the scriptures, how then can we, without them, know the mind of God, in relation to what we should believe, or what we should do? By nature we are blind; we have no spiritual sight, nor have we light in which we may see; for to see, we require not only sight but light. Christ is the true light of the world, and we only have light in as far as we are made to see him as he is revealed in the scriptures by the internal illumination of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit brings us to the word, and through the word brings us to Christ, and through Christ brings us to God. This is true spiritually, in relation to our salvation, and is true temporally, in relation to our duty; true personally, and true socially; true ecclesiastically, and true politically; true in every relation of life; for Christ is the Head of all things, and all things centre in him. How dreadful it is, to hear men talk of rights independent of Christ, who is the heir of all things, the owner of all things, the ruler and governor of all things in heaven and in earth!

What will become of individuals, who will not know Christ, acknowledge and receive him, and trust in him for their peace, comfort and salvation? The answer is easy in relation to all who have the word of God. And what will become of nations, especially such as have the light of divine truth, that do not know and acknowledge him as their Head and Lord; and who will not bring their glory unto him; who have set up themselves *without* him, not by him, and their rulers without regard to him and his blessed word, the only rule for human conduct. For men who have the written word to set up any other rule, is deistical and rebellion against God; and all nations that do so will be destroyed. Messiah, the Son of God, has been by him appointed as the King of kings, and Lord of lords, the *Prince* of the kings of the earth; and civil rulers are commanded to be

subject to him, to rule for him, for his glory and the good of the church, which is his spouse, the bride, the Lamb's wife. They are to take his law from his mouth, and to acknowledge it as the *law paramount!* If it is a great sin to set up kings without God, and princes without consulting him in his word, how much greater must the sin be, to set up a constitution of civil government, and go into a full organization, without acknowledging God, and regulating all by and according to his holy and blessed word! If God is the God of nations, if Christ is the *Head of nations*, and if all things are made subject to him as Mediator in heaven and in earth and under the earth, for the good of his body, the church—all which is clearly taught in the bible—what arrogance and rebellion in nations or people, to think they have any lawful power but from him! God is the only source of power, and all power is committed to Christ, and there is no true legitimate power but from him, and how can those who have not so much as acknowledged him in *any* relation, much less in *that* relation, have any *lawful* power? What alas! is the great noise made by the multitude and the politicians of the day, crying up the great *power* of the *people*; “all power is inherent in the people,” “the *sovereign people*.” What, are the people independent of God? Will the associating of themselves together free them from the obligations of God's law? and can there be any lawful rule to regulate them in setting up a civil government, in all the departments thereof, and in the full administration thereof, but the word of God contained in the *scriptures* of the Old and New Testaments! Any other notion, where people have the scriptures, is infidelity; and to practice on such notions is High Treason against the God of Heaven, who is the God of nations, and against Prince Messiah, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Whatever was God's end in giving us any institution, civil or religious, ought to be our end in acting upon the grant, and in the administration thereof. If he has given us civil government for a special purpose, it will not do for us to exercise it for another; and as God made all things, and hath given all things for his own glory, which is the ultimate end of all things, nations are bound to make this their end in setting up their governments, in framing their constitutions and their laws. God's end in creating the world, ought to be our end in living in the world. All things are, and must be,

referable to God. He made all things for his own glory.— For this end he made this world on which we live, to manifest his goodness in the way of shewing mercy to miserable beings, through the glorious plan which he had, in his goodness, devised from all eternity, by and through his eternal Son, who became incarnate, that he might redeem lost sinners. This was the greatest of all his works. Hence all others must be subservient to this. Now as this was God's end in making the world, it ought to be ours in living in it. We must have no by-ends; God's end must be ours, or we are in a state of rebellion against him. Whatever we do, whether we eat or drink, we must do all to the glory of God; surely then this ought to be the end of any people in setting up civil government, and in framing their constitution. Now, in order to harmonize, and not be found in a state of rebellion against God, we must take his word as our rule in every thing, seek his Spirit for our guide, and have his glory for our end; and in vain will we look to find a legitimate government, as the true ordinance of God, where these things are neglected. Let men never say all this is right in relation to spiritual things, but what have nations to do with it in their political relations? To all such, we answer, that the word of God is the only rule to direct men in all their relations of life, and any other view is infidelity.— Magistracy is an ordinance of God given by him to man, for his own glory, the honor of Christ, and to promote the best interests of mankind. He has given his word for a rule in relation to this, as well as all other things, and it is infidelity in the highest degree to set up a civil government without consulting this rule and making it the foundation of the constitution of a land. Those who act thus are surely guilty in manner and form, as stated in the above text: "They have set up kings, but not by me; they have made princes, and I knew it not." Where a people expect to be free from this guilt in setting up a civil government, they must do the very thing, for the want of which, this charge is brought against a people; they must set it up by the rule of God's word, and for the end for which he has been pleased to appoint it. To set up the ordinance of Magistracy, God must first be acknowledged as the God of nations. It will not do merely to acknowledge a Divine Being in his Providence; but we must acknowledge him as the God of nations, and as such receive this ordinance from his hand, for the very end for which he hath

appointed it. We must, in framing a constitution, take his word contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as our *rule*, and make it the foundation of the constitution; strict regard must be also paid to the qualifications required in that word, of all such as are to fill up the departments of state, to the exclusion of all such as have not scriptural qualifications,—as ineligible to fill up any part of God's ordinance of magistracy. This matter must not be left to the people to do it or not, as they may think proper; but the constitution must make the provision for such and such only, inasmuch as all others are unqualified according to the holy law of God, in such case made and provided. Where the scriptures are, they must be the rule, and nations and people are bound to take them as such, whatever men may say, yea whatever ministers may preach, to the contrary. In framing a constitution, particular regard must be paid to Jesus Christ, who has a “name written upon his vesture and on his thigh, King of kings, and Lords of lords.” O that nations and people of every land could see this blessed name, which is above every name, “that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.” Phil. ii. 10. This is the command of God in relation to his Son, our Lord, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, to whom he hath made all things subject, and whom all are to honor, as they honor the Father. God hath appointed him the Head of all things, and all power in Heaven and in earth is given unto him; all things are put under him, and nothing is excepted but he who did put all things under him. Now surely nations are included in these all things; therefore to frame a civil constitution and go into a full organization of a civil government without having respect to the honor of *Prince Messiah*, under whom this ordinance is put for the good of his body, the church, is Treason against him, for which nations will have to account. But they will not see their duty, nor know where their true honor lies; yea, where their safety and happiness lie; because the nation that forgets God shall be turned into hell; and that nation that will not serve Christ and the interest of his church, shall be destroyed. But alas! during the 1260 years of the reign of Antichrist, they have agreed to give their power to the beast. “All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her.” O that God's

people would come out of her, and from every thing that props her up, and have nothing to do with the beast upon which she rides. Nations who act thus without regard to God as the God of nations, without respect to Christ the Head of all things, the *Prince* of the kings of the earth, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Ruler and Commander of the people, without due regard to the word of God, as the only rule in framing their constitutions, and who make no provision to have the departments of state filled up by men who have scriptural qualifications, to the exclusion of all others, and who do not make the glory of God, the honor of Messiah, and the best interests of mankind their end in setting up their governments, are in a state of rebellion against God. And, to say the least, a constitution thus framed, without regard to the above rules, is infidel, and cannot be acknowledged as the ordinance of God, notwithstanding all the good things that may be in it. O that nations could see these things! O that the hearts of all the people of God were lifted up in his ways, like the heart of good Jehoshaphat! Alas! how dreadful it is that nations will not acknowledge *Prince Messiah* as *their* Prince. O how much this would be to their honor as well as their happiness; and what a blessed time it will be, when "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ;" and when he shall take to himself his great power and reign. May the good Lord hasten it in his good time and way, and in the mean time, give power to his Witnesses to do their part, and to be found faithful until they have finished their testimony. O may they never give up the crown rights, and royal prerogatives of our glorious King and Lord, though they have to seal their testimony with their blood. If we expect to be found among these faithful witnesses, we must faithfully witness for all Christ's *rights* and against all opposition thereto, from whatever quarter, whether from church or state. Alas! how hard it is to break down the *anti-christian* and *deistical* influence which so shamefully corrupts the nations of the world, poisons society, and ruins the souls of men. There are but two great sides in the world, on one or other of which men are arranged. Either they are on Christ's side, or on the side of his enemies; and the grand enemy of God, of his Christ, and of his people is at the head of those, who are carrying on a war against Prince Messiah and all that fight under him. Now it is a matter of

the highest importance for us to know on which of these sides we are found. By our fruits in this, as in other matters, we are to be known. Our Lord has said, and he is the perfect Judge of persons and of things, that those who are not for me are against me. Satan must be at the head of every thing that is against King Jesus, whatever men may think or say; and if this be the case, what a dreadful thing must it be, for professing friends to be found in the camp of the enemy. In our engagement in any matter in which we have to associate with others, our first enquiry should be, On whose side are they with whom we are about to enter into alliance? for any purpose whatever, religious, civil, or political. If we ought not to enter into partnership with the open and avowed enemies of Christ even in temporal business; see 2d Chr. xx.37, and 1st Kings xxii.48-49, much less should we join with his enemies in political matters; for can the friends of Christ join with them and be guiltless? And how can a nation be for Christ which does not acknowledge him as the King of kings,—the Prince of the kings of the earth---*Titles* given to him by the Holy Ghost in many places of his holy word---or which does not honor him with the honor which God the Father has put upon him.

In the darkest days of the church, Christ has had his witnesses, and he will have them until the end of the world, but especially, during the 1260 years of the reign of the man of sin. These however are comparatively few. They are called his *Two* witnesses.

We may expect there is a trying time coming on the church. Indeed, we may well say *this* is a trying time, when many who once made high professions as witnesses for Christ's *crown rights*, can now find many pretexts for their defection, and are employed in pulling down what they once built up; who make crooked paths, that that which is lame may be turned out of the way. Alas! many that walked with us in the way of witnessing for Christ against this unscriptural government, and all others in opposition to HIM, walk no more with us in this way. May all the friends of Christ rally round his standard, contend earnestly for the truth, and witness a good confession for him; and may the time soon come when all the anti-christian powers shall fall nevermore to arise. The following texts are offered in addition to the above, as the foundation of the foregoing remarks;

which remarks, as far as they are consistent with truth and righteousness, I pray Almighty God to bless for his own glory and the good of the reader.

Exod. xxviii. 21; Deut. xvii. 14, 15, 18, 19; 2 Sam. xxiii. 3; 1 Kings ix. 4, 5, 6, 7; 2 Kings xi. 17; Psalms ii.; cx. 5; ix. 17; lxii. 11; xciv. 20; Isaiah xlix. 23; lx. 12, 16; Jer. x. 7; Dan. ii. 44; vii. 22, 27; Amos ix. 8; Eccle. x. 16, 17; Prov. viii. 15, xiv. 34; Matthew xxiii. 18; Eph. i. 20-23; 1st Tim. vi. 15; Col. ii. 10. Rom. xiii.; Rev. xi. 3; Rev. xvii. 13 to 18; xiii. 3, 4; xix. 13, 16.

A LAYMAN.

THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF CONTENDING FOR THE TRUTH.

(Partly abridged from the Scottish Presbyterian.)

“That ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints,” is an inspired injunction, the *nature and importance* of which cannot be too frequently inculcated. By *faith*, as it occurs in this passage, we must understand the *truths of divine revelation*. In this sense alone, it can be a hereditary and transmissive possession, and a proper subject of Christian struggle. It is equivalent with “profession” and “form of sound words”—phraseology under which the truth is elsewhere commended to the steadfast adherence of the followers of the Redeemer. When we aver that it means the truths of divine revelation, we intend the whole truth—the entire system of truths contained in the inspired volume. We readily admit, that in this inspired collection, there are some truths more important than others, as is apparent from their intrinsic value, and the frequency and prominence with which they are exhibited. These ought to be contended for with a degree of zeal corresponding to their importance; still the others possess their full share of importance in the one grand and entire system of truth, and should be contended for with a corresponding earnestness.—We reject, as utterly unscriptural, the popular division of truths into *essentials* and *non-essentials*—a distinction popular, because convenient for men of unsound and loose views in matters of faith and practice; but no where warranted in the word of God. That there are truths more important than others, we have already admitted; but that there are

any truths which it is immaterial whether we profess or overlook, believe or reject, is a totally different proposition, and one which we utterly oppose as untrue and of most dangerous tendency. Every truth, whatever may be its comparative importance, is inspired by the Spirit of God, and ratified by the authority of the Eternal. And can it be a matter of indifference whether we believe or discredit the testimony of Jehovah? Whether we embrace or overlook what his holy authority has presented to our obedience and inculcated with most solemn sanction. Every truth unfolds some feature of the Divine character and government, and is designed to collect a revenue of praise from the understandings and hearts of the children of men. And is it a matter of indifference whether we promote the manifestation of the Divine excellence, and co-operate in the advancement of the chief end of our being? Every truth is subservient to some infinitely wise purpose; for while "all scripture is given by inspiration of God;" it "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." And the admission that some portions are more important than others, by no means relieves from the duty of earnestly contending for even the least important. There are some members of the body which are much inferior to others in usefulness; but the least is serviceable and could not be dispensed with without much inconvenience—without mutilating the body. The hand is less important than the head; the finger than the eye; but is it a matter of indifference whether a man retain his hand, his fingers or not? Indeed, to assert that there is a class of Divine truths, however insignificant in the estimation of carnal human judgment, which may be dispensed with, is an impugning of the Divine wisdom, and a contemning of the Divine authority—is a setting up of our partial and corrupt judgment above the law of the Almighty, and a deciding that to be useless and superfluous, which his infinite wisdom saw fit to reveal, recommend and enjoin—is a refusal to be guided implicitly by the dictates of revelation, and to preserve inviolate and unimpaired the solemn truth which he has committed to us.—The respect we owe to the authority of God, the obligations we are under to manifest his praise, joined with a regard to our own best interests, bind us to the duty of "contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

This department of christian duty, bears no affinity to the

unhallowed wranglings which are generally included under the term "contending." It admits neither of the variance of feeling, nor the extravagance and violence of action which are called into exercise in the contending of carnal men, and in the strife of the fanatic or enthusiast. Such unholy weapons are proscribed from a cause so sacred as that in the maintenance of which the Witnesses of the meek and lowly Jesus are engaged. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual." "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities," &c. The papal hierarchy has indeed prescribed the most violent measures for the propagation of its execrable dogmas; and, in instances unnumbered, the fire and faggot have been resorted to, when argument failed to uphold its delusive systems. Accordingly the annals of its history are stained with deeds of cruelty and blood. Similar were the means employed by Mahomet, the Arabian imposter. And if the absurd and impious tenets of the Koran have obtained an extensive footing, it is because they were enforced at the point of the sword. Equally cruel and unholy were the violent means employed in Britain, by the house of the Stuarts, and their abettors, in forcing, or endeavoring to force their system of Episcopacy, false doctrine and worship upon our Covenanted fathers. But the Christian religion, being a system of moral and spiritual truths, needs no such aid, admits of no such means, to give it effect. Its own intrinsic energy, rendered irresistible by the Spirit of God, is the power by which it operates. In this view it will be at once perceived that, *a public profession* of the truth is indispensably necessary on the part of the person who would contend for it. Without this, he cannot be in a capacity, nor can he possess the means, for discharging this duty. Without this, his efforts, however multiplied and energetic, are expended without yielding material aid, because they have no avowed character, nor any determinate end. Nothing is plainer than this. Were the public profession of religion, in all respects, at this moment abandoned by all its votaries, the existence and very name of christianity would perish from earth, and its ordinances and institutions would soon be numbered with the things that are past. Public and social acts of duty are necessary to preserve and perpetuate this system; and it is indispensable for the man that would be instrumental in upholding it, that he make a public avowal of its doctrines. It is when he pub-

licly avows the cause, and associates himself with those who maintain the testimony of Jesus, that any person occupies a position in which he can, with consistency and success, wage fully the warfare of truth. Then he has the whole truth before him—then his interest and sympathies and love are enlisted on its side—then his prayers are ascending to the God of truth and grace for “Heaven’s guidance and Heaven’s strength”—then his wisdom and exertions, his means and influence, which were formerly inert, or operating in a detached and inefficient channel, are condensed to the utmost point of their energy, and combined in the support and establishment of the faith for which he contends—then, under the fostering influence of gracious ordinances, blessed and rendered efficacious by the Holy Ghost, the doctrines of truth become, as it were, imbedded in his heart, and are maintained with his very being. Witness the Martyrs and Confessors of Jesus in all ages. Alas! that there should be found any, with professed respect for the character, and with avowed desires and hopes for the advancement of the Redeemer’s kingdom in the maintenance of his “Crown rights and royal prerogatives,” remaining in a neutral position.—The cause of Christ shall most certainly prosper and prevail, and there shall be no lack of instrumentality when the Almighty arises, in his own time, to do his own work; but *neutrals* shall not sustain any part in the honorable character of Witnesses, nor participate, in any measure, in their promised lofty rewards. In vain do they plead their good wishes—their sincere prayers. Without a public profession, these are in a great measure lost, while they themselves bear some resemblance to the soldier, who in the day of battle, is found wearing no badge of distinction, and espousing no side in the contest.

But besides a public profession, *the most strenuous efforts to maintain and diffuse the principles of truth*, are necessary in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. The very end why the truth is contended for is, that it may be maintained by ourselves and diffused among others. Contending for it is just maintaining it. When the philosopher contends for his peculiar dogma; when the politician stands up and pleads on behalf of his peculiar line of policy, it is with a view to give their respective sentiments a strength and diffusion. And infinitely more entitled to maintenance and support is the subject for which the Wit-

ness struggles—truth, divine truth—truth which is the transcript of the moral character of Jehovah, and the manifestation of his glory—truth which exerts such a beneficial influence upon the character and destinies of mankind, which was committed to him by the God of heaven, as a sacred deposit, to be profitably used by himself, and to be transmitted inviolate to a future generation. And this truth he is to maintain and propagate in all its purity and entireness; he must not surrender one principle, he must not recede from one attainment—he must not conceal nor withhold one iota of truth—“For God established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children.” And it is not an easy position which the Witness assumes, when he addresses himself to this duty; the very language in which the duty is inculcated, both in this and other instances, intimates the difficulty of performing it—“contend for the faith”—“hold fast your profession”—phraseology which pre-supposes the existence of opposing causes, and implies the necessity of a resolute and unabating effort on the part of the Christian combatant; and various are the causes which concur to relax the attachment of the Christian to the truth; there is the constitutional disrelish of our nature at divine truth—the seductions and wiles of Satan—the profits and pleasures of the world, with the degeneracy of professing worshippers. And, alas! how many truths have been sacrificed to these inimical causes; how many have been abandoned for the sake of an evil world itself—what sacrifices of duty, of principle, and of conscience, have been made to its gratifications and pursuits. Yielding to its insidious influences, Demas and Judas, and Ananias with his unhappy consort, made shipwreck of their faith; and every successive generation of mankind furnishes a new list of professions abandoned, and of principles surrendered by means of the same deleterious cause. And when we add to this, that the character of the age and society in which a man lives—the kind of situation which he occupies—and the nature of his relationships in life, give rise to additional opposing causes; we can easily perceive that his position is an exceedingly difficult and arduous one. And yet in the face of all this opposition, he must adhere with unflinching faithfulness to the testimony of Jesus—he must avow it before the world—he must defend it before the world—he must,

with all consistent and prudent means, endeavor to explain its nature, and inculcate its importance upon his fellow-creatures; and his example as well as effort, should aid in giving it diffusion and stability. Such an employment requires decision of character—firmness of resolution, and sustained as well as energetic action—above all, an implicit dependence upon stipulated grace, and a constant and fervent application to heaven for an increase of spiritual ability. “Finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord,” &c. “Put on the whole armour of God.” “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,” &c. Nor is the exhibition of a public and judicial testimony,—by which we mean a public vindication of truth, and as public a refutation of error,—the least important department of the duty of “contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” Whatever be the measure which we are anxious to advance, interest prompts us to employ the method now announced. If it be a pious or benevolent enterprise, it is usual to advance all the arguments which can be urged in its favor, and at the same time to refute every alleged objection. And this method exhibits the truth in the plainest and most palpable form, and enables the mind to form the more accurate and impressive conceptions of it.—It is with truth as with some objects in nature, whose form and lineaments are more strikingly exhibited, when in juxtaposition with others of an opposite character. Thus, artificial light sheds a clearer and stronger ray, when shining in the midst of darkness. A highly cultivated and blooming patch of ground impresses its beauties upon the mind, with greater vividness, when surrounded by a wide-spreading scene of bleakness and barrenness. And truth when accompanied with a statement and condemnation of the opposite error, succeeds in effecting a deeper and more lasting impression upon the mind, and in fortifying it strongly against the inroad of heresy. But it is not simply on account of its expediency, that the Church adopts this plan—this is the plan which the authority of heaven has presented, and which it is her duty as well as benefit to pursue; hence it is, that while the Church is enjoined “to make known the testimony of God to generations to come,” she is likewise instructed to “cry aloud and spare not, to lift up her voice like a trumpet, to show the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.” In accordance with this, she is

designated a "witness," and a "standard-bearer," with other appellations, which assign to her the task of testifying in favor of truth, and witnessing against error. And while holding forth a Scriptural and judicious testimony, the church is pursuing one of the great designs of her formation. Constituted by God the repository of truth—it is her province to rescue the truth from oblivion—to vindicate it from the aspersions of its enemies—to present it in its unsullied and unimpaired state before the world, and to invite its inhabitants to believe and obey it. "Thou hast given a banner to them that feared thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." And we offer no violent construction to the text, when we explain this banner given to the Church, of her testimony—as this may be embodied in her confessions, her creeds, and judicial acts. The exhibition of her testimony affords a rallying point—a centre of union to the friends of truth—and combines their energies; and encouraged by the numbers that accede to their ranks, and glowing with ardent wishes for the triumph of their sacred cause, they wax stronger and stronger—they boldly proclaim and defend the truth, and bring in to its support a concentration of strength, a stability of purpose, and a weight of influence, which are not easily withstood. And when thus arrayed under the banner of their testimony, they become formidable to their opposing enemies—their means of aggression become more effectual, and their bulwarks of defence more impregnable; and as they move on in their career of holiness and truth, they appear "terrible as an army with banners."

(To be continued.)

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

(Continued from page 26.)

On the 29th of May, 1644, the General Assembly met in Edinburgh, without any Commissioner from the King. Mr. Bonnar was chosen Moderator. Letters were submitted from the Presbyterians in Ireland, the Commissioners in London, and the Westminster Assembly, to all of which favorable answers were returned. As the leading men in the Church

were either with the army or in London, no important measure was concluded at this meeting. In January, of the following year, instead of May, which had been formerly fixed, the meeting of the General Assembly was held, to hear the report of Baillie, Gillespie, and Warriston, who came home for this purpose, respecting the progress of Covenanted Uniformity. Douglas was Moderator. The report of the Commissioners gave general satisfaction. The Directory was adopted, with a slight variation respecting the manner of communicating at the Lord's table. It was soon after ratified by the Estates, and generally received throughout the nation, as regulating the practice of Presbyterian worship—a purpose which it serves, in the various sections of the Presbyterian Church in Britain, till this day. This Assembly discovered a laudable concern for the interests of learning—various measures were adopted, relative to the encouragement of the public seminaries, and their vigilant superintendence by the Church, and to the qualifications and morals of Students, which afterwards proved to be of the most salutary tendency. Church censures were appointed to be inflicted on the superstitious observers of popish and prelatical festivals. An humble remonstrance was prepared, and transmitted to the King, complaining of the heavy calamities which afflicted the nation; and letters were sent to their Commissioners, and to the Assembly of Divines, encouraging both to proceed in the intended uniformity. This Assembly also emitted a "*Solemn and Seasonable Warning to the Noblemen, Gentlemen, Ministers, and Commons of Scotland, and to the Armies without and within the Kingdom,*" in reference to public sins and calamities, and the duty of all classes, at such a season. This is an eminently faithful document, which well deserves a diligent perusal; many of the serious counsels contained in it, will be found as suitable to the present times as to those in which it was first published.

The grand disputes between the Presbyterians and the Independents, in the Westminster Assembly, chiefly took place in 1645, and respected the ordination of Ministers and the power of the Keys. In consequence of the Episcopal dignitaries taking part with the king, and no presbytery being yet organized on the Presbyterian system, the candidates for the ministry could not obtain regular ordination; lay preaching had become common; and a door was opened for the introduction of sectarianism and confusion. To prevent

the increase of these evils, in April, 1645, the parliament enacted, that no person should be allowed to preach, who is not ordained a minister in some reformed church; and the civil authorities were directed to commit offenders to prison. By a message from both houses, the Assembly was enjoined to prepare a Directory for the ordination of ministers in England, without the presence of a diocesan bishop. This led to lengthened discussion in the Assembly. The Erastians and Independents strenuously argued for the right of every congregation to ordain its own office-bearers. After a debate of *ten days*, it was agreed in the face of a dissent by *seven Independents*—that it is requisite that no single congregation which can conveniently assemble with others, should assume to itself the sole right of ordination.

The propriety of the *imposition of hands* by the Presbytery in ordaining ministers, was under discussion for two days, and was ultimately established, after an able speech by Mr. Henderson. On the point, whether ordination should precede election to a particular charge, there was considerable diversity of opinion. The presbyterians argued that it might—1. From the ordination of Timothy, Titus, and Apollos, without any particular charge. 2. Because it is a different thing to ordain to an office, and to appropriate its exercise to any particular place. 3. If election precede, then there must be a new ordination upon every election. 4. Otherwise, a minister could be no minister out of his own congregation, and could neither plant churches, nor baptize new converts. The Independents, in reply, argued that Timothy and Titus were extraordinary office-bearers; that there is no inconvenience in re-ordination; and that they did not admit the consequence, that a person regularly ordained in one church, must be re-ordained on every removal. Their chief difficulty, however, lay in this—that ordination without election to a particular charge, implied a conveyance of office-power, which they utterly refused to admit, as being subversive of their system. On this article it was finally agreed, by a compromise—that it is agreeable to the word of God, and very expedient, that those who are to be ordained ministers be designed to some particular Church, or other ministerial charge.

The great debate, however, was on the question—Whether many particular congregations should be under the government of one presbytery? Just as the Assembly was a-

bout to enter on the discussion of this vital subject, a deputation from the Dutch churches arrived about the beginning of March, and presented a letter from the *Classes of Wallachia*, censuring the Apologetic Narrative of the Independents, and very much in accordance with the views and practice of the church of Scotland. This letter was received in the most affectionate manner; and, after being translated into English, it was transmitted to be read by both houses of parliament.

For *thirty days* the question of the *divine right of presbyteries* was argued in the assembly. The Independents, who were firmly united, and unwearied in diligence and artifice, displayed, on this occasion, even on the testimony of their opponents, great learning, eloquence and boldness. Whitelock, Selden and others, who were of the Erastian views, proposed to present the assembly's judgment to the parliament in these terms—"That the government of the church by presbyteries is most agreeable to the Word of God, and most fit to be settled in this kingdom." This being refused by the leading presbyterians, for *fifteen days*, it was argued against the claim of presbyterianism; and for *fifteen* more in favor of independency being of divine right;—on coming to a vote, the presbyterian view was carried by a very great majority. In a similar manner, the subordination of *courts* of judicature and appeal was established. The main foundations of presbyterian church government being thus established, the Independents dissented, in writing, and complained to the world, alleging injustice on the part of the assembly. To this it was replied, that all parties had been treated with impartiality, and the Independent brethren were at liberty to act as they deemed best for their own interests. The Erastians, who were most inclined to the independent views, reserved themselves for the house of commons. There, through the influence of Whitelock, Selden, and other civilians, and the duplicity and management of Cromwell and his supporters, instead of affirming the divine right of Presbyterianism, it was carried—"That it is lawful and agreeable to the word of God, that the church be governed by congregational, classical, and synodical assemblies."* The Scottish commissioners naturally felt chagrined by this agreement, and the citizens of London petitioned against it. Chiefly at the instance of Cromwell, a committee of the house was appointed to in-

* Whitelock's Memoirs, p. 106.

quire into the origin of these petitions; and although the Presbyterians met with kinder treatment from the peers, Henderson and those who acted with him, were no little mortified to find that the Erastians and Independents, the enemies of covenanted uniformity, had obtained great influence in the councils of the nation.

On the subject of the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline, or the "power of the Keys," as it was called, the differences between the parliament and the assembly were carried still farther. In the assembly, the Independents claimed the power of suspension from the Lord's supper, and of excommunication for the brotherhood of each congregation; while the Erastians were for the most open and free communion, and for referring all ecclesiastical offenders to the civil magistrate. The presbyterians carried the point in the assembly in favor of scriptural order and the liberties of the church; but, in parliament, they were opposed by Selden and Whitelock, thro' whose influence, specific *rules, for suspension* from the sacrament in cases of ignorance and scandal were brought in; and it was ordained, that if any person found himself aggrieved by the Church Courts, he might carry the matter before Parliament.* The members of the House also, who were members of the Westminster Assembly, were appointed a standing Committee, to consider and lay before the Parliament all other scandals not already specified, which might afterwards be alleged as a sufficient ground of suspension from the Sacrament.

The Scottish Commissioners, in common with the English Presbyterians, lamented this assumption of Erastian power over the Church by the Parliament, and strongly remonstrated against it. None understood better than they, the proper limits of the Ecclesiastical and Civil Jurisdiction; and while they desired to obtain the civil sanction to the Church's profession, none ever discovered more unceasing anxiety to maintain the independence of the Church, and to protect it against the encroachments of civil rulers. In this instance, they were perfectly aware that the Parliamentary decision was a scheme invented by the Independents, assisted by the Lawyers, to enervate the whole system of Presbyterian Church Government; yet in spite of the open and covert opposition

* These *Rules* may be found in Neal's *History of the Puritans*, Vol. III., p. 245.

with which they had to contend, they persevered in seeking from the State the full establishment of the Presbyterian polity. As the fruit of their faithful contendings, an Ordinance in Parliament was passed, June 6th, 1646, for establishing the principal observances of the Presbyterian discipline and government. According to this Statute, the Presbyterian Church in England and Wales was to be governed by Sessions, and classical, provincial, and national assemblies. The Eldership of every parish was appointed to hold weekly meetings; the Classical Assembly of each county was to meet monthly, the Provincial twice a year, and National Assemblies once a year. Each Parochial Eldership was to send two or more, not exceeding four Elders and a Minister to the Classical Assembly. Each Classical Assembly was to send two Ministers, and four ruling Elders at least, not exceeding nine, to the Provincial Assembly; and the National Assembly was to be constituted of two Ministers and four Elders, from each Provincial Assembly.* In the terms of the Statute, it was declared that, if upon trial this ordinance was not found to be acceptable, it should be revised or amended.

Some account of the extent and working of the Presbyterian system in England, the conclusion of the Westminster Assembly, and the death and character of Henderson, must be reserved to another paper.

CHRONOLOGICAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE COVENANTED CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND.

December, 1557. The leading Protestants, at consultation held in the city of Edinburgh, unanimously resolved to exert themselves in behalf of the reformation, and to adhere to one another. For this purpose they subscribed a solemn bond. At the same time they renewed their invitation to Knox to return and aid in establishing the national reformation. With this invitation the reformer complied, and left Geneva for the last time, in the month of January, 1559. May, 1559.—The Queen regent, in direct violation of her engagements to the protestant lords, cited all the reformed preachers to appear at Stirling and undergo a trial. In pur-

* Rushworth, p. 226; Neal's History, Vol. III., p. 249.

suance of their bond of "mutual assurance," the leaders of the Protestant cause determined to adhere to their brethren, the preachers, and support them against the dissimulation of the Queen. Alarmed at the numbers who seemed resolved to make common cause with the preachers; and being frankly told by some of the leaders, that if she violated her promises they would consider themselves released from allegiance to her, she promised to quash the trial. With this the Protestants were satisfied; and trusting in the royal promise returned to their respective homes. But, in thus confiding in the promise of the queen regent, they became the dupes of her repeated dissimulation: for when the day which had been appointed for the trial came on, she caused the process to be continued; and the accused, not being present, were outlawed, and all were forbidden to harbor or assist them on pain of rebellion.

The protestants were thus driven to the necessity of defending themselves from violence by having recourse to arms. They accordingly concerted measures for opposing the designs of the regent. The Queen advanced towards Perth with an army, threatening to lay it waste with fire and sword; but so promptly had the preparations of the Protestants been made, that she dare not venture to attack them; both armies encamped in the neighborhood of Perth till overtures of accommodation were proposed by the Queen and acceded to by the Protestant leaders. This suspension of hostilities was not of long duration. The Protestants, taught by past experience that confidence could not be placed with safety in the promises of a popish princess, renewed their bond of union, and took other measures for their common defence. The result of a civil war, which followed very soon, was the ruin of the popish interest in Scotland.

In 1560, the reformed religion obtained the security of a legal establishment. The parliament which met at the close of the civil war gave their approval to the reformation which the people had already adopted. At the request of the privy council, the first Book of Discipline was prepared during the course of that year by Knox and five other ministers associated with him. Speaking of the Book of Discipline, John Row, who was one of the six ministers engaged in preparing it, says, "they took not their example from any book in the world, no, not from Geneva; but laying God's word before them, made reformation according thereto." This confutes

the false assertion of Bishop Keith, who says that Knox studied to conform the government of the church to that which he had seen in Geneva. On the 20th Dec. 1560, the first General Assembly of the Church of Scotland met in the city of Edinburgh. This first Assembly consisted of forty members, six of whom were ministers of the gospel. The chief subject of deliberation was the manner in which men properly qualified might be most speedily and effectually procured for the important office of the ministry. During this meeting it was also resolved that "the election of ministers, elders, and deacons be made publicly in the kirk, and premonition to be made upon the Lord's day preceding the day of election."

For some time the meetings of the General Assembly were conducted without a presiding officer. During the sitting of the seventh Assembly, the following resolution on this subject was agreed to, "For avoiding confusion in reasoning, it was agreed that a Moderator should be appointed to moderate during the time of every Assembly."

In 1580, the national covenant was first entered into. "It was drawn up by John Craig, and consisted of an abjuration, in the most explicit terms, of the various articles of the popish system, and an engagement to adhere to and defend the doctrine and discipline of the reformed church in Scotland." This transaction was occasioned by the discovery of intercepted letters from Rome, granting a dispensation to the Roman Catholics to profess the Protestant tenets for a time, provided they preserved an inward attachment to the ancient faith, and embraced every opportunity of advancing it in secret.

The national covenant was sworn and subscribed by the king and his household, and afterwards, in consequence of an order of the Privy Council, and an act of the General Assembly, by all ranks of persons throughout the kingdom. This solemn transaction had a powerful influence in rivetting the attachment to the national religion.

The second Book of Discipline was adopted in the General Assembly of 1578, and entered into the register of the Assembly 1581. It was ratified by several succeeding Assemblies—by that particularly of 1638, and is also included in the national covenant.

In 1588, a bond or covenant was entered into for the defence of the church and nation of Scotland, in consequence

of the intrigues and machinations of the remaining partizans of the Romish apostacy. These partizans were known to be acting in concert with the bigoted Philip of Spain, who was now busily preparing to invade Protestant Britain, and reduce it once more under subjection to the papal authority. These things excited the alarm of the Protestant ministers of Scotland, and induced them to remonstrate with king James, who appointed some members of his Privy Council to meet with a deputation of the ministers. This joint committee prepared a bond for the mutual defence of the king, church, and state. This bond, recommended by the ministers, was eagerly entered into by persons of all ranks. In this solemn obligation they consider the reformed religion and the king's estate to have the same friends and enemies, and both to be equally threatened by foreign preparations for prosecuting that detestable conspiracy, named the holy league, and by the emissaries of the foreign powers and their accomplices within the realm, and they engage before God to defend and maintain both against every attempt, foreign or domestic, particularly the threatened invasion; and bind and oblige themselves to meet with their friends in arms at such time and place as his majesty should appoint, and hazard their lives, lands and goods in defence of the true religion and his majesty's person.* This transaction has been confounded with the national covenant or confession of faith, entered into 1580. And what is rather remarkable, the accurate Dr. Robertson has fallen into this mistake. In this, however, he has been corrected by the historian Aikman. In relation to the bond itself the following commendatory sentiments are expressed by Robertson.† Strange or uncommon as such a combination may now appear, many circumstances contributed at that time to recommend it, and to render the idea familiar to the Scots. When roused by an extraordinary event, or alarmed by any public danger, the people of Israel were accustomed to bind themselves by a solemn covenant to adhere to that religion which the Almighty had established among them; this the Scots considered as a sacred precedent, which it became them to imitate. In that age no considerable enterprise was undertaken in Scotland without a bond of mutual defence, which all concerned reckoned necessary for their security.

*Aikman's History, book 3rd. | †History of Scotland, book 7th,

WATCHMEN IN THE EAST.

In Eastern countries, where they have no clocks, and the mechanical contrivances used to supply the want of them are exceedingly imperfect, and but rarely possessed, the method generally employed to take the note of time, is by dividing the day and night into four equal parts. The periodical return of these is announced by watchmen, some of whom are stationed on high towers, others patrol the various streets of the city, while their duty is to proclaim with a loud cry, or by instruments of music, the intervals as they pass. This is more particularly required of them at night, in the course of which they are obliged, not only at each watch, but at frequent intervals in the progress of it, to cry aloud in order to give the people, who depend upon them for the protection of their lives and property, assurance that they are not sleeping at their posts, or negligent of their charge. On these latter occasions, the exclamations are always addressed to their comrades, and generally consist of some expressions in the form of a dialogue tending to encourage one another in the discharge of their cheerless and monotonous task; some watchword, or set form of words, similar to what a traveller informs us is used by the watchmen of the caravans of the Desert, who, in going their rounds, exclaim when they meet, "God is merciful," while the other responds in the same elevated tone, "Blessings be on you," or, "Mind yourselves." The responsibility of these officers is very great, for whatever outrages are perpetrated, the watchman who is on duty at the time is required to make rigid satisfaction—in cases of robbery, by payment of an equivalent for the stolen goods, and in cases of murder, with his own blood; and hence, those who are appointed to this office are obliged, both from a sense of duty, and from dread of the serious consequences of negligence, to be constantly perambulating the streets, and making the most vigilant efforts to prevent the occurrence of any disorder.

The knowledge of these customs, which existed in almost all the countries of the East during the successive ages in which the Scriptures were written, and which still exist in many places, affords an obvious explanation of many circumstances mentioned in sacred history, and of many allusions made to watchmen and their employment, both in the Old

and New Testaments. Thus we may learn from the preceding observations the time of the night intended in the following and other passages. Judges vii. 19—"So Gideon, and the three hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp, in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch." Matt. xiv. 15—"And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea." See also Luke xii. 26-40. Reckoning their night to begin at our six o'clock in the evening, the first, second, third and fourth watches, consisting of three hours each, were the successive periods into which they were accustomed to divide that portion of time. We also discover how natural it was for them to use the term *watches* as a general expression for the *night season*, as in Psalm lxiii, where the Psalmist speaks of the time he spent in devotion,—“When I meditate on thee in the *night-watches*.” To the loud and frequent cries with which the return of these intervals was made known, the Prophet Isaiah alludes in lii. 8, where he says, “the watchmen shall lift up the voice;” in lxii. 6, where he speaks of them “never holding their peace day nor night, crying aloud, and keeping not silence;” and also in lvi. 10, where in speaking of careless and unfaithful watchmen, he describes them as “*dumb dogs, dreamers, that love to slumber.*” The vehemence of these nocturnal exclamations of the watchmen, would frequently awake those that were asleep; and as to persons thus suddenly roused, the quarter of the night announced as having elapsed, would seem to have passed in the oblivion of their slumbers with the rapidity of a moment, we may perceive the exquisite force and beauty of the simile in Psalm xc. 4, “*A thousand years are in thy sight but as a watch in the night.*” The custom of the watchmen crying aloud in the course of the watches, and that, too, by saluting each other when they met, in the form of a set dialogue, was observed also by the ancient officers of this description among the Jews—the watchword being then, as it is still, we have seen, among the watchmen of the caravans, some pious sentiment, in which the name of Jehovah is especially expressed. Two remarkable instances of this occur in Scripture, the one is in Isaiah lxii. 6, where, speaking of the watchmen of the Temple, who were always Levites, and among whom the same regulations subsisted as among other watchmen, he addresses them under the poetical description of, “Ye that make

mention of the Lord," i.e., ye whose watchword is the name of Jehovah. The other instance is in Psalm cxxxiv, the whole of which, as is justly observed by Bishop Lowth, is nothing more than the alternate cry of two different divisions of the watch. The first watch addresses the second, reminding them of their duty; the second answers by a solemn blessing. The address and the answer seem both to be a set form, which each division proclaimed aloud at stated intervals to notify the time of night:

First band of watchmen—"Bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, who stand in the night in the house of the Lord, Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and bless the Lord."

Second band of watchmen answer—"The Lord bless thee out of Zion—the Lord that made heaven and earth."

According to the rigid, and in many cases sanguinary laws of the East, to which we have already adverted, the office of a watchman is neither a sinecure nor is it an easy task, as he is responsible for the safety both of the persons and things he is appointed to guard, and must pay, without the hope of mercy, the penalty of the utmost farthing, either with his fortune or his life, for whatever disasters happen, if it be proved that the occurrence took place in consequence of his having failed to give the alarm, or not having taken due precautions to prevent the mischief. The reader of the Scriptures will remember the tremendous effect with which the fervid imagination of Ezekiel employs this circumstance to portray the responsibility of the spiritual watchmen who are stationed upon the bulwarks of Zion, and whose duty it is to proclaim aloud to the people the warnings, reproofs, and admonitions of the word of God. "O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." (Ezekiel xxxiii. 8, 9.)*

* In some places of the East, particularly Persia and Hindostan, watchmen are included among the officers that compose the household establishment of the grandees, and one of them (the number being generally

LAST DAYS OF JOHN KNOX, THE SCOTTISH REFORMER.

He was very anxious to meet once more with the session of his Church, to leave them his dying charge, and bid them a last farewell. In compliance with this wish, his colleague, the elders, and deacons, with David Lindsay, one of the ministers of Leith, assembled in his room on Monday the 17th, when he addressed them in the following words, which made a deep and lasting impression on the minds of all:—"The day approaches, and is now before the door, for which I have frequently and vehemently thirsted, when I shall be released from my great labors and innumerable sorrows, and shall be with Christ. And now, God is my witness, whom I have served with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that I have taught nothing but the true and solid doctrine of the gospel of the Son of God, and have had it for my only object to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the faithful, to comfort the weak, the fearful and the distressed, by the promises of grace, and to fight against the proud and rebellious by the divine threatenings. I know that many have frequently complained, and do loudly complain, of my too great severity; but God knows that my mind was always void of hatred to the persons of those against whom I thundered the severest judgments. I cannot deny that I felt the greatest abhorrence at the sins in which they indulged, but still I kept this one thing in view, that, if possible, I might gain them to the Lord. What influenced me to utter whatever the Lord put into my mouth, so boldly, and without respect of persons, was a reverential fear of my God, who called, and of his grace appointed me a steward of divine mysteries, and a belief that he will demand an account of the manner in which I have discharged the trust committed to me, when I shall stand at last before his tribunal. I profess, therefore, before God, and before his holy angels, that I never made merchandise of the sacred word of God, never studied to please men, never indulged my own private passions or those of others, but faithfully distributed the talents intrusted to me for the edification of the Church over which I watched. Whatever obloquy wicked men may cast on me respecting this point, I rejoice in the testimony of a good conscience. In the mean time, my dear brethren, do

four, corresponding to the watches of the night) is stationed near the bed of his master to guard it, and be ready, whenever he requires it, to tell him how far the night is advanced. Such officers we are told by Josephus, were in the court of Ahasuerus. For on that night on which the king could not sleep, and on which he called for the records of his kingdom, and there was read over to him the conspiracy which Mordecai had discovered; the historian adds, "the king bade the scribe who was reading stop, and having inquired of those that were appointed for the purpose, what hour of the night it was, and having been informed it was already day, he ordered, that if they found any of his friends were already come and standing before the court, they should tell him, that he might instantly bestow some reward on Mordecai."

you persevere in the eternal truth of the gospel ; wait diligently on the flock over which the Lord hath set you, and which he redeemed with the blood of his only begotten Son. And thou, my dearest brother Lawson, fight the good fight, and do the work of the Lord joyfully and resolutely. The Lord from on high bless you, and the whole Church of Edinburgh, against whom, as long as they persevere in the word of truth which they have heard of me, the gates of hell shall not prevail.”* Having warned them against countenancing those who disowned the king’s authority, and made some observations on a complaint which Maitland had lodged against him before the session, he became so exhausted as to be obliged to desist from speaking. Those who were present were filled both with joy and grief by this affecting address.—After reminding him of the warfare which he had endured, and the triumph which awaited him, and joining in prayer, they took leave of him, drowned in tears.

After his interview with the session he became much worse ; his difficulty of breathing increased, and he could not speak without great and obvious pain. Yet he continued still to receive persons of every rank, who came in great numbers to visit him, and suffered none to go away without advices, which he uttered with such variety and suitableness as astonished those who waited upon him. Lord Boyd, coming into his chamber, said, “I know, sir, that I have offended you in many things, and am now come to crave your pardon.” The answer was not heard, as the attendants retired and left them alone ; but his lordship returned next day in company with Drumlanrig and Morton. The Reformer’s private conversation with the latter was very particular, as afterwards related by the earl himself. He asked him if he was previously acquainted with the design to murder the late king. Morton having replied in the negative,† he said,—“Well, God has beautified you with many benefits which he has not given to every man ; as he has given you riches, wisdom and friends, and now is to prefer you to the government of this realm.‡ And, therefore, in the name of God, I charge you to use all these benefits aright, and better in time to come than you have done in times by past ; first to God’s glory, to the furtherance of the evangel, the maintenance of the Church of God, and his ministry ; next for the weal of the king, and his realm and true

* This speech is translated from the Latin of Smeton, which accounts for the difference of style which the attentive reader must have remarked.

† Morton afterwards acknowledged that he did know of the murder ; but excused himself for concealing it. “The quene,” he said, “was the doare thareof ;” and as for the king, he was “sick a bairne, that there was naething told him but he wald reveill it to hir agane.” Bannatyne, 494, 497.

‡ The Regent Mar died on the 29th of October preceding. The nobility were at that time assembled at Edinburgh to choose his successor, and it was understood that Morton would be raised to that dignity. He was elected regent on the day of Knox’s death. Bannatyne, 411, 412, 427.

subjects. If so ye shall do, God shall bless you and honor you ; but if ye do it not, God shall spoil you of these benefits, and your end shall be ignominy and shame.”*

On Thursday, the 20th, Lord Lindsay, the bishop of Caithness, and several gentlemen, visited him. He exhorted them to continue in the truth which they had heard, for there was no other word of salvation, and besought them to have nothing to do with those in the castle. The earl of Glencairn (who had often visited him) came in, with Lord Ruthven. The latter, who called only once, said to him, “If there be any thing sir, that I am able to do for you, I pray you charge me.” His reply was, “I care not for all the pleasure and friendship of the world.”

A religious lady of his acquaintance desired him to praise God for what good he had done, and was beginning to speak in his commendation, when he interrupted her. “Tongue ! tongue ! lady ; flesh of itself is over-proud, and needs no means to esteem itself.” He put her in mind of what had been said to her long ago, “Lady, lady, the black one has never trampit on your fute ;” and exhorted her to lay aside pride, and be clothed with humility. He then protested as to himself, as he had often done before, that he relied wholly on the free mercy of God, manifested to mankind through his dear Son Jesus Christ, whom alone he embraced for wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. The rest of the company having taken their leave of him, he said to Fairley of Braid, “Every one bids me good-night ; but when will you do it ? I have been greatly indebted to you ; for which I shall never be able to recompense you ; but I commit you to one that is able to do it, to the eternal God.”

On Friday, the 21st, he desired Richard Bannatyne to order his coffin to be made. During that day he was much engaged in meditation and prayer. These words dropped from his lips at intervals :—“Come, Lord Jesus—Sweet Jesus, into thy hand I commend my spirit. Be merciful, Lord, to thy Church which thou hast redeemed. Give peace to this afflicted commonwealth. Raise up faithful pastors who will take charge of thy church. Grant us, Lord, the perfect hatred of sin, both by the evidences of thy wrath and mercy.” In the midst of his meditations, he often addressed those who stood by, in such sentences as these :—“O serve the Lord in fear, and death shall not be terrible to you. Nay, blessed shall death be to those who have felt the power of the death of the only begotten Son of God.”

On Sabbath, the 23d, (which was the first day of the national fast,) during the afternoon sermon, after lying a considerable time quiet, he suddenly exclaimed, “If any be present, let them come and see the work of God.” Thinking that his death was at hand, Bannatyne sent to the Church for Johnston of Elphingston. When he came to the

* Morton gave this account of his conference with the Reformer to the ministers who attended him before his execution. Being asked if he had not found Knox’s admonition true, he replied, “I have fand it indied.” Morton’s Confession. Bannatyne, 508, 509.

bed-side, Knox burst out in these rapturous expressions :—"I have been these last two nights in meditation on the troubled state of the Church of God, the spouse of Jesus Christ, despised of the world, but precious in the sight of God. I have called to God for her, and have committed her to her Head Jesus Christ. I have fought against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things, and have prevailed. I have been in heaven, and have possession. I have tasted of the heavenly joys where presently I am." He then repeated the Lord's prayer and the creed, interjecting devout aspirations between the articles of the latter.

After sermon, many came to visit him. Perceiving that he breathed with great difficulty, some of them asked, if he felt much pain. He answered, that he was willing to lie there for years, if God so pleased, and if he continued to shine upon his soul through Jesus Christ. He slept very little ; but was employed almost incessantly either in meditation, in prayer, or in exhortation. "Live in Christ. Live in Christ, and then flesh need not fear death. Lord, grant true pastors to thy Church, that purity of doctrine may be retained. Restore peace again to this commonwealth with godly rulers and magistrates." Once, "Lord, make an end of my trouble," Then, stretching his hands towards heaven, he said, "Lord, I commend my spirit, soul, and body, and all, into thy hands. Thou knowest, O Lord, my troubles ; I do not murmur against thee." His pious ejaculations were so numerous, that those who waited on him could recollect only a small portion of what he uttered ; for seldom was he silent, when they were not employed in reading or in prayer.

Monday, the 24th of November, was the last day that he spent on earth. That morning he could not be persuaded to lie in bed, but, though unable to stand alone, rose between nine and ten o'clock, and put on his stockings and doublet. Being conducted to a chair, he sat about half an hour, and then was put to bed again. In the progress of the day, it appeared evident that his end drew near. Besides his wife and Bannatyne, Campbell of Kinyeancleugh, Johnston of Elphinston, and Dr. Preston, three of the most intimate acquaintance, sat by at turns at his bedside. Kinyeancleugh asked him if he had any pain. "It is no painful pain, but such a pain as shall soon, I trust, put an end to the battle. I must leave the care of my wife and children to you," continued he, "to whom you must be a husband in my room." About three o'clock in the afternoon, one of his eyes failed, and his speech was considerably affected. He desired his wife to read the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. "Is not that a comfortable chapter ?" said he, when it was finished. "O what sweet and salutary consolation the Lord hath afforded me from that chapter !" A little after, he said, "Now, for the last time, I commend my soul, spirit and body, (touching three of his fingers,) into thy hand, O Lord."—About five o'clock, he said to his wife, "Go, read where I cast my first anchor ;" upon which she read the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel, and afterwards a part of Calvin's sermons on the Ephesians.

After this he appeared to fall into a slumber, interrupted by heavy moans, during which the attendants looked every moment for his dissolution. But at length he awaked, as if from sleep, and being asked the cause of his sighing so deeply, replied :—"I have formerly, during my frail life, sustained many contests, and many assaults of Satan ; but at present he hath assailed me most fearfully ; and put forth all his strength to devour, and make an end of me at once. Often before has he placed my sins before my eyes, often tempted me to despair, often endeavored to ensnare me by the allurements of the world ; but these weapons were broken by the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, and the enemy foiled. Now he has attacked me in another way : the cunning serpent has labored to persuade me that I have merited heaven and eternal blessedness, by the faithful discharge of my ministry. But blessed be God, who has enabled me to beat down and quench this fiery dart, by suggesting to me such passages of Scripture as these :—"What hast thou that thou has not received ? By the grace of God I am what I am ; not I, but the grace of God in me."—Upon this, as one vanquished, he left me. Wherefore I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ, who has been pleased to give me the victory ; and I am persuaded that the tempter shall not again attack me, but, within a short time, I shall, without any great pain of body, or anguish of mind, exchange this mortal and miserable life for a blessed immortality through Jesus Christ."

He then lay quiet for some hours, except that now and then he desired them to wet his mouth. At ten o'clock, they attended to the evening prayer, which they had delayed beyond the usual hour, from an apprehension that he was asleep. After this exercise was concluded, Dr. Preston asked him if he had heard the prayers. "Would to God," said he, "that you and all men had heard them as I have heard them ; I praised God for that heavenly sound." The Dr. rose up, and Kinyeancleugh sat down before his bed. About eleven o'clock, he gave a deep sigh, and said, "Now it is come." Bannatyne immediately drew near, and desired him to think upon those comfortable promises of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which he had often declared to others ; and, perceiving that he was speechless, he requested him to give them a sign that he had heard them, and died in peace. Upon this, he lifted up one of his hands, and, sighing twice, expired without a struggle.

He died in the sixty-seventh year of his age, not so much oppressed with years, as worn out and exhausted by his extraordinary labors of body and anxieties of mind. Few men were ever exposed to more dangers, or underwent greater hardships. From the time that he embraced the Reformed religion till he breathed his last, seldom did he enjoy a respite from trouble ; and he emerged from one scene of difficulty and danger, only to be involved in another still more distressing. Obligated to flee from St. Andrews to escape the fury of cardinal Beaton, he found a retreat in East Lothian, from which he was hunted by archbishop Hamilton. He lived for several years as an outlaw, in daily apprehension of falling a prey to those who eagerly sought his

life. The few months during which he enjoyed protection in the castle of St. Andrews, were succeeded by a long and rigorous captivity. After enjoying some repose in England, he was again driven into banishment, and for five years wandered as an exile on the continent.— When he returned to his native country, it was to engage in a struggle of the most perilous and arduous kind. After the Reformation was established, and he was settled in the capital, he was involved in a continual contest with the court. When he was relieved from this warfare, and thought only of ending his days in peace, he was again called into the field ; and, although scarcely able to walk, was obliged to remove from his flock, and to avoid the fury of his enemies by submitting to a new banishment. He was repeatedly condemned for heresy, and proclaimed an outlaw ; thrice he was accused of high treason, and on two of these occasions he appeared and underwent a trial. A price was publicly set on his head ; assassins were employed to kill him ; and his life was attempted both with the pistol and dagger. Yet he escaped all these perils, and finished his course in peace and in honor. No wonder he was weary of the world, and anxious to depart ; and with great propriety might it be said, at his decease, that “he rested from his labors.”

On Wednesday, the 26th of November, he was interred in the churchyard of St. Giles. His funeral was attended by the newly elected Regent, Morton, by all the nobility who were in the city, and a great concourse of people. When his body was laid in the grave, the regent emphatically pronounced his eulogium, in these words, “There lies he, who never feared the face of man.”

OBITUARY OF MRS. JULIA ANN H. M'KEE.

Mrs. McKee was born at Florrentown, near Philadelphia, in the year 1795. She was in her youth trained up under the ministry of the Rev. Dr. Green, until the year 1819, when she connected herself with the Reformed Presbyterian church, and attended on the ministry of Dr. Wylie. In 1821 she was married to the Rev. Charles B. McKee, now pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian church in Rochester, and died on the 7th of February last, in the 45th year of her age. Her death was sudden and unexpected ; though she had not enjoyed good health for years, she had visited some of her sick friends a few days before her death. Death did not, however, find her unprepared. She closed her pilgrimage in a firm reliance on the mediation and finished righteousness of her glorious Redeemer, in the full hope of entering into the joys of her Lord. It may truly be said of her, that she was remarkably qualified for the station allotted her ; oftentimes the tuition and multiplex cares of a rising family devolved upon her, during the long absence of her husband. Few had a better opportunity of observing her in all these relations than the writer of these lines, and in justice he can say whether

she may be viewed as the accomplished lady, the agreeable friend, the affectionate wife, or the tender mother, there were few that surpassed her. Her agreeable disposition and her suavity of manners, secured for her the esteem of all that had the pleasure of enjoying the privilege of her acquaintance. For her uniform practice, she was the constant and zealous advocate of the great system of truth she professed; but her warfare is over, her race is terminated, and she is in possession of the crown that fades not away, while her husband and her five children are left here to bewail their irreparable loss,—not as those who have no hope, for the righteous have hope in their death.

“Be ye also ready.”

ITEMS.

American barbarism.—The Territorial government of Florida has recently imported from Cuba thirty-three *blood hounds*, with six Spaniards, their trainers and keepers, for the purpose of employing them in the Seminole war. The matter has been brought before Congress, and the public are informed that the government of the United States will allow the animals to be used for the purpose for which they have been imported. Indeed part of them have been already used, and the success has been such as to cause some to predict the speedy termination of the war, through their employment. What a spectacle! In the nineteenth century, in republican, enlightened, invincible! *christian!!* America, BLOOD HOUNDS employed, with the approbation of the general government, to hunt down a handful of miserable sons of the forest like beasts of prey. Which should be considered by way of pre-eminence *THE savages?*—the Indians, the blood hounds, or those who employ them? It is an easier matter to settle where rests the awful amount of guilt incurred, and where the *smallest* share of magnanimity! The deepest indignation should be felt and every where expressed at a measure that would have disgraced the most barbarous nation in the darkest of past ages. Hitherto such a mode of warfare was adopted only by the veriest savages, or by fiend-like persecutors.

Captured Africans.—An appeal has been taken by the Spanish minister against the decision of Judge Judson, given in our February No., decreeing the return of these unfortunate men to their native land. This will bring the case before the Circuit Court, where, we trust, the decision of the court below will be promptly affirmed. Meanwhile Cinquez and his companions will enjoy longer opportunity of receiving instruction; and the great cause of human rights will be again eloquently argued before one of the high judicial tribunals of the nation.

The General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church is to meet in Alleghenytown on the 3rd Tuesday of June next, at 7 o'clock, P.M.

THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

MAY, 1840.

No. III.

ON TRUST IN GOD.

This grace and duty are commended to the earnest attention of the people of God. In itself replete with advantage to their security and sanctification, it is also urged with unusual frequency in the Holy Scriptures, and exhibited in the most engaging manner in the lives of eminent saints. It is proposed to offer a few practical reflections respecting its nature and benefits.

Trust in God is a grace of the Holy Spirit, enlightening the mind in the knowledge of its glorious object as he is revealed in Christ Jesus, and inclining the heart to approve, rest and confide in him. Darkness covers the understanding, and enmity repels the heart of man by nature with respect to the true God. His being, subsistence, perfection, and counsels are revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and by faith in these, itself a grace of the Spirit, the mind of the believer is irradiated with true knowledge and his heart drawn to God. There is an intimate connection between faith, knowledge, and trust in God, and the word of truth. The certainty and immensity of the mercy of God in the meritorious obedience and death of Christ, revealed to and embraced by the believing and penitent, fill and confirm the heart with a holy assurance. "I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live."

Its proper aim and effect is to give to God all the glory of the saint's deliverance and security. His wise and righte-

ous dominion is discerned in adversity. "Be still and know that I am God." "My times are in thy hand." His bountiful hand is recognized in prosperity. "Return unto thy rest O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."—And hence this grace of trust in God is equally brought into exercise in those vicissitudes of life which are most opposite in their nature. It is true indeed that outward events in themselves have an aspect unfavorable to these gracious effects. Sense repines at apparent dereliction. "Zion said the Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me." And great prosperity has often been unpropitious to the grace of trust in God. "In my prosperity I said I shall never be moved." But the heart of the faithful, firmly adhering to God according to his holy covenant, derives meat from the eater, and sweetness from the strong. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God." And the inspired Psalmist, contemplating the most terrible adversities, and even death itself, is unmoved. "Yea, though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me." And the saint's improvement of the divine goodness, past and present, is ever to confirm the exercise of trust in God. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Thus is he glorified, as all wise, all powerful, ever faithful, when the saint in the exercise of trust in him, is assured that he is able to devise and to execute whatever is necessary to the fulfilling of promises, which he will infallibly perform to the end.

It is also greatly improved from its own nature by a judicious and considerate regard of the Providence of God. For what is that Providence but an execution in detail of his promises and the declarations of his word therein. "He is working all things according to the counsel of his own will." That Providence, most minute, constant and universal, is ever bringing before the saint, "the doing of the Lord and the working of his hand." And hence this grace is hourly and constantly conversant with God, the object of trust as he is presented in his ever active agency in "his holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions." Indeed it is difficult to conceive how this grace can exist, or how it can be brought into exercise as a duty, without a knowledge of, and a steadfast belief in, the Divine Prov-

idence directing and controlling all events from the least to the greatest. "The hairs of your head are numbered"—"not a sparrow falls to the ground without your Heavenly Father." And it is for this reason that the heart of the saint still cleaves to him in the severest adversity, for it is regarded as his own work. "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me."

It is moreover greatly cherished and strengthened by meditating upon that fulness of joy in a blessed immortality, which is expected from the object of trust. God is trusted by the saint for matters of infinite and endless excellence, and with matters of infinite and endless interest. He is trusted for what he has promised, and this is eternal life; he is trusted with what he has received into his gracious protection to eternity, and that is the soul and body of the saint.—This trust Paul expresses, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." This expectation, this hope, is founded on the gratuitous mercy of God in Christ, upon his infallible promises, and upon the perfect merit of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the exclusion of all merit or ability in the believer, and these are so revealed and sealed upon the heart by the Holy Spirit, as to furnish at times the most holy exultation. "After that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise which is the earnest of our inheritance." "We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." And indeed the very nature of trust in God in Christ is such that, as it is an exercise of the mind enlightened in the knowledge of Him, and of the heart cleaving to him, so it contemplates his infinite and everlasting excellency and sufficiency and rejoices in Him as the portion of the soul. And hence, arguing from the greater to the less, it is assured that all temporal good and security shall be bestowed, since such blessedness is in reserve for the saint, as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man."

Of such a grace and such a duty, the benefits must be obvious, great and numerous. The habit of intimate communion and intercourse with God in his word and providence must eminently promote the sanctification of the people of God. The wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and sovereignty of all his ways must ever be growing in the apprehension of the saint, as God is ever in these his ways the object of

his trust, and by their own nature reflecting their sanctifying influence upon his understanding and heart. Indeed it is in the exercise of this duty that the saint walks with God, and in that holy society is more and more assimilating to him.—God is more and more from day to day in all his thoughts, and the will of the believer is more and more moulded into the will of his Heavenly Father. Where this trust predominates it cannot be, but that a desire and study to please God must predominate. Sin, the procuring cause of evil, and the displeasure of God will become more the grief of the saint, than the evils which he suffers, and the favor and approbation of God more rejoiced in than the prosperity he may bestow.

Besides, the consolation he bestows in affliction, and which he alone can confer, shuts up the confidence of the saint to trust in him alone. Many are the emergencies in the life of the righteous in which they are keenly made to feel the utter vanity of ordinary relief. Their temporal support may be suddenly reduced or utterly fail—their reputation may pass under a dark cloud of even unmerited reproach and odium—the friends in whom they had perhaps sinfully trusted may be withdrawn—but God remains ever the same. Their entire dependence upon his holy Providence makes it plain that all events are equally under his control and subject to his direction, and hence that trust never forsakes them. Not even the most desolating want and chilling poverty however produced—nor the foulest aspersions which blast their good name—nor the desertion, and neglect, and enmity of those who once were esteemed friends—nor disease, nor pain of body can destroy or uproot this holy principle. How often have the saints, afflicted and oppressed with the most overwhelming tribulations, drawn largely on this unfailing source of consolation, and rebuked the misgivings and repinings of unbelief. “Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me ; still trust in God, for I shall praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.” He that pardoneth their iniquity will also take away their reproach, and “bring forth their righteousness as the light and their judgment as the noon day.” What indeed are wealth, reputation, friends, health and life itself but advantages and possessions, distributed by a sovereignty inscrutable and irresistible, and held on earth by a tenure the most precarious. The saint sees them all fail, “but God doth

fail me never," is his just assurance, and he hopes to see them all replaced in riches of glory, in the perfect and everlasting honor that comes from God, and life that never ends.

But this grace fills up another important place in the interest of the saint, and besides promoting his sanctification and replenishing his soul with good hope and everlasting consolation imparts a steadfastness of character to be derived from no other source. Uniformity of principle and of deportment may be very easily maintained, and are certainly not severely tried when the great amount of external influence co-operates to maintain them, and the distinction between right and wrong is constant and obvious. But when, as sometimes happens, these obvious marks of discrimination are insensibly wearing out, or are violently assailed—when principles, good in themselves, are pursued to extremes they do not recognize, and a corrupt fungus, a useless excrescence is obtruded in place of the true and wholesome fruit of the tree of life—whenever the righteous are divided, and the "power of the holy people scattered,"—then it is that trust in God acts a part the most efficient in the support of the saint.—"Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man in whom there is no help." "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God." God in his adorable sovereignty "removeth the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged." But "the meek will he guide in judgment and the meek will he teach his way." "He hath never forsaken them that put their trust in him." Trusting in God, the saint still stands by the Lord of the whole earth; Him he expects to plead his cause, to unfold and to advocate his truth—and from Him he expects the final reward to be given to all the faithful—"well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

THE PUBLICATION OF THE BANNS OF MARRIAGE.

In all countries, and in all ages, marriage has been considered a matter of public interest, and so treated in the laws, civil and ecclesiastical, and in the national habits and customs. If any exception has occurred, it will be found in connexion with a state of society, in other and all respects

beneath the decency and propriety of the marriage relation. Laws, requiring a due notification, in some public form, of the intention of marriage, existed, we believe, in all Protestant countries at the Reformation. These laws, in forms somewhat modified, are still in operation. Most of the United States have laws similar in their tenor ; though they are little better than a dead letter anywhere, except in the New-England States. In these states, the character for sobriety and discretion, derived from the worthy Puritan fathers, has not yet been so far corrupted, as to allow of breaking down the salutary hedges, which wisdom erected for the preservation of the purity and solemnity of so important a relation. Such laws we think wise ; we think them necessary to the safe-keeping of marriage ; agreeable to the divine institution of marriage, and requisite to its proper solemnization. And if so, when enacted, they are binding, as to their observation, upon the conscience. This we proceed to establish by a brief consideration of the subject of marriage itself, and the right method of entering into the married state.

1. *Marriage is a divine institution.* When God had formed Eve, he introduced her to Adam, and constituted the first marriage ; saying “a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife ; and they shall be one flesh.” Gen. ii. 24. These are the words of God, Matt. xix. 4, and contain the law of marriage for all ages and all people. It is to be between one man and one woman ; “a man—his wife.” It is a permanent relation, dissoluble only by the death of one of the parties, or by most flagrant misconduct—such as destroys the very ends of the relation : “shall cleave unto his wife : and they shall be *one* flesh.” And, as this law is explained by the infallible interpreter, Matt. xix. 6, God joins all who are lawfully married.

When we say that it is “a divine institution,” we do not mean, that all persons are bound to marry. This is settled in the negative, very plainly, in the vii. chap. of 1 Cor. It is a voluntary relation. But when constituted it has its laws already prescribed, and no human power can alter them. It resembles, in this respect, civil and ecclesiastical society, both of which have their laws ordained by God. Marriage has its ends, its laws, the parties who may enter into the relation, the duties of the parties, and the reasons for which it may be lawfully dissolved, all arranged and made known by “Him who made them, male and female.” No power can

lawfully alter these laws, suspend their execution, or add to them. But it is the duty of rulers in Church and in State to frame such regulations as shall keep up the relation to the divine institution. No power can rightfully permit one man to have more than one wife, nor make the wife the head of the husband, nor dissolve this relation on any but scriptural grounds. But it is the solemn and imperative duty of the "higher powers" to adopt such measures as shall tend to keep this institution pure by guarding against hasty, and ill-devised, and wicked formations of the marriage relation. It is a divine ordinance—man cannot alter it, but he can and he ought to, watch over it. To do this, he must begin at the beginning, and watch over the constitution of the relation.

2. *Marriage is a matter of public interest.* It is not only a divine, but a social institution. Parents have a deep interest in the suitable marriage of their offspring. How often, after all the toil, and expenditure, and anxiety of years, have the hopes and cherished expectations of parents, been dashed in a moment, by the imprudent marriage of their offspring?—The church has a great interest at stake in the connections formed by her youth. "And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed." Her children and youth are the hope of the church. Society is based, in a sense, upon the domestic relation. If it goes wrong, law and order, religion and morality, are poisoned in their very fountains. The bible confirms this. Contracts of marriage, during the patriarchal dispensation, and even under the Mosaic, were formed, not by the parties themselves, but by the parents:* they must consequently have been public to *all* concerned. This is the case even to the present day in Eastern countries, where the ancient customs are, to a considerable degree, still retained. We have, however, conclusive evidence that marriage was treated, and that *with the divine approbation*, as a matter that should be previously made known, in the custom of betrothals. That before marriage the parties were, for some time, betrothed, as espoused to each other, is often mentioned in scripture. It is also undisputed, that this was the custom until the advent of Christ, for Joseph was espoused to Mary. These betrothals were of the nature of public engagements of marriage; for we learn from Deut. xxii. 25-27, that the sin of fornication committed with a woman betroth-

* Gen. xxiv. throughout. xxix. 18-19. Judg. xiv. 2.

ed, was to be punished the same as adultery ; which would have been without reason, had not the intention of marriage been made public, so that it would in all probability be known to him who sinned with her. Nor was this betrothing a mere occasional transaction : it was a standing custom, originating, there can be little question, in the known and felt necessity of some plan to secure in the constitution of this relation, the rights and feelings of parents, to protect the interests of the church and of society, and throw a hedge around this divine institution. At all events, the inference from all this, is plain and important. Marriage appears in the scripture history, what it certainly is in its own nature, as of public interest, and to be entered into after the due notification of *all* concerned.

3. *Marriage must be constituted according to some acknowledged form.** For five reasons. First, the marriage vow is most solemn and important. The parties become bound, when they enter into this relation, to many new duties, and that while life lasts. Every proper, every christian feeling, dictates that this vow should not be made in a trifling and irreverent manner. Yet this would inevitably be the result of removing all solemn forms, and exhortation from the formation of this relation. Even Quakers, who have attempted to discard all forms in other things, have seen the necessity of retaining some here ; and they, in truth, have a solemn and impressive mode of constituting the married state.

Second. Without some recognized form it would be impossible for either civil or ecclesiastical society to guard marriage by its sanctions. They must first agree upon what shall be considered as marriage. And what they agree upon must be observed in constituting it ; otherwise, it is evident, there would be endless difficulty in arriving at the settlement of this primary and fundamental point to all other action.

Third. Without this the relation would not be safely formed : for it would be always difficult, and often impossible to verify it. Let there be no certified evidence of the marriage, and the whole of its civil and ecclesiastical sanctions, at once fall to the ground.

* We do not now argue respecting any particular form, or affirm anything respecting the person or persons most suitable to officiate.—Our testimony and the Confession of Faith declare it expedient that it be committed to duly qualified ecclesiastical or civil officers.

Fourth. Far less important vows, engagements and promises, must receive a certain form, and many of them must pass through the hands of a specified officer, before they become binding in law. Deeds and mortgages must be registered, wills witnessed and acknowledged according to established forms. Society has found it necessary to guard, in this way, by law, the transfer of property, and other transactions requiring verification, and important to its welfare. So it has marriage, and with still greater reason. For what contract so fundamental to its interests? what so vital to the parties themselves?

Fifth. And, in our opinion, as strong as any we have offered, and bearing directly upon the subject of our article, a public, authorized form of taking marriage vows is absolutely necessary to prevent improper marriages. Leave it open, and marriage would become a mere name: the importance and sacredness of the vows that constitute it would disappear, if, in any presence, at any time, under any circumstances, marriages could be formed. Imagine, for a moment, the state of things that would follow. Youth, under the impulse of passion and caprice, would hastily vow, and as soon repent. Brief connexions would take the place of marriages, and society would go to ruin. And here we observe, in anticipation of our succeeding remark, that those who, under the forms of legal authority, solemnize the hasty marriages that disgrace our country so often, are guilty of an act which tends, and that not remotely, to invalidate the whole domestic relation. They encourage secret marriages; and if our arguments on the subject of its publicity have any weight, act directly in the face of an important element in a divine institution. But this leads to our fourth and last observation. *The intention of marriage should be duly notified.* For three reasons.

First: without this, the appointment of individuals for the solemnization of marriage, *may* be rendered nugatory. We do not here repeat what has just been said upon the importance, nay, *necessity*, of such solemnization. We now take this for granted. Persons authorized to celebrate marriage, will be either honest and well intentioned, or they will be dishonest, and willing to marry whoever comes, and to pass them through the legal forms. Publication of the banns is requisite for both. For the former, that they may, with a clear conscience, perform their part in laying on irrevocable

vows. For the latter, that they may be prevented from perverting their trust and degrading their station, by making their power subservient to the impulses of passion, the whims of caprice, &c. Were two strangers to present themselves for marriage, or even persons as well known as our common acquaintances, what should an honest and conscientious man receive as testimony, that the intended marriage is not secret; that there is no bar, by previous marriage or pre-contract, or some other thing, to its lawful solemnization? Is he to be at the trouble of investigating the matter? Ought he to defer it unless satisfied? Or must he proceed? Take away publication of the banns, and many such instances would occur. But let there be the lawful and *certified* proclamation of the parties, and then the administrator could proceed with a good conscience, and however it might result, no blame could be attached to him.

On the other hand, of what use would the prescription of certain forms be, unless there is some mode of ensuring their *honest* execution. But it is plain, that leave it to every administrator to frame his own scale of testimony as to the propriety or impropriety of marrying parties offering themselves, and self-interest will lighten the scale. And, in short, the result would be what we often see now, that the forms established by society would furnish little or no check to the passions that urge hasty and rash marriages that end so often in the misery and sometimes ruin of the parties.

Second. Proclamation is necessary to prevent marriages taking place unknown to parents, guardians, &c. And here let it be observed, in the first place, that what is requisite, is some regulation which will be a bar in the way of the ill-intentioned, that will prevent the dishonest and the undutiful from acting in this matter secretly. Not that parents, &c. have, in all instances, an arbitrary right of forbidding; but they have *always* a right to *know*. And, in the second place, that nothing but a public and well-understood announcement can serve this purpose. Rumor cannot be relied on—her “thousand tongues” utter a thousand lies. There must be some form equivalent, in some degree, to the ancient betrothals. Otherwise, what is to hinder young persons, of either sex, leaving their father’s house, as if for recreation or business, and returning home married? The due publication of banns provides an almost sure guarantee against such gross abuses.

Third. Proclamation is an act of mercy to the parties themselves. It gives them time to reflect, or rather, it compels the most rash and imprudent to take time. And to many, even this would be a boon. But chiefly because it *may* lead to the discovery of circumstances which would prevent the formation of a miserable relationship; or its formation, by trampling upon the rights of third persons. If but one such instance should occur to hundreds, it would furnish ample reason for the enactment and careful execution of the laws we now advocate.

The necessity of thus guarding it in the very outset, becomes apparent, when we reflect that an injury here is, in most instances, irreparable. Parties once joined, cannot, except in rare instances, be disunited. Instead of considering the publication of their intention to take upon them these unalterable engagements, as a hardship, as exposing them to the public, the parties should learn to view it as a rule fraught with benefits to a community who would conscientiously and universally observe it; and as of importance, *possibly*, to themselves. And, also, ministers of the gospel and others entrusted with a matter of so high importance as the solemnization of marriage, should look upon proclamation as a wise and good rule; an advantage to others, and as calculated to preserve them from the sin and scandal of being instrumental in forming ill-advised and unbecoming marriage relationships.

Another inquiry suggests itself here. Ought the church to treat the improper celebration of marriage, in this respect, as a censurable offence? We have no doubt she ought. It is the church's duty to employ all lawful means to preserve the purity of the marriage relation. This will not be doubted by any one who admits its importance. Now, as marriage is a divine institution, should not those be visited with the church's censures who would, by their conduct, strike a blow at this relation in a vital part, by refusing, in their own case, to give due publicity to their intention of marriage? We think this unquestionable.

In conclusion we merely add, that we are fully aware of the unpopular character of the enactments which we have now been advocating, wherever they are not generally observed in the community; but we are as fully convinced of their value, and would regret to find them disregarded, or lightly esteemed, especially by those who have taken so high

a stand for the ordinances of God, notwithstanding the indifference of others, as Reformed Presbyterians have. We would impress upon young and old, married and unmarried, the importance of keeping in this matter, by the good and wholesome regulations of our fathers. These laws embody the wisdom of many of the wisest and best of many lands, and have been sanctioned by the wise and good of many generations. God approves them. And let us remember, "He that breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him."

THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF CONTENDING FOR THE TRUTH.

(Continued from p. 46.)

The Church must likewise lift up her testimony against error. This department of duty, we are aware, has become exceedingly unpopular in our day, and the church who would plainly and boldly denounce existing evils, is marked down as a narrow-minded and bigoted community—but she must not be deterred from performing her duty by these uncharitable charges. This is a duty she owes to the truth itself, with whose solemn charge she has been entrusted. Were an attack to be made upon certain civil rights committed to our preservation, would we not repel it with all our might, and endeavor to rescue our deposit. And is not error an attack upon truth—an attack upon its very existence—an attack upon the most responsible trust that can be devolved on man—and will she not repudiate and condemn it. She owes it to herself—for by pointing out the flagrancy of error and accompanying it with her severe condemnation, she is taking effectual means to fortify her members against its inroads. She owes it to the party against whom she directs her testimony—for by exposing and refuting the error, she is employing a becoming—a divinely appointed means for dispossessing error, and leading the deluded subjects back to the truth. It is one of the recorded aphorisms of the good, and in many respects distinguished, John Newton, "that the principal method for defeating heresy is by establishing truth. One proposes to fill a bushel with tares; now if I can fill it," says he, "full with wheat, I shall defy his attempts." But in the

accuracy of this saying, we cannot altogether acquiesce—for it assumes what is not the case, that the human mind is free of error. Were a human mind like an empty bushel, the simple establishment of truth would have been sufficient; but it is already prepossessed with error—and a process of *emptying* must be performed before we can begin that of *filling*. She owes it to her Redeemer, whose example she imitates, when she testifies against error—his glory is connected with the overthrow of error; and for this very purpose he descended down to earth; and his whole life, while traveling upon its impure surface, was a practical, impressive, and continued testimony against error.

Having offered these few observations on the *nature* of contending for the truth, its *importance* now demands our attention. It will be universally admitted, that the importance of a duty is determined by the magnitude and number of interests which pend upon its performance. This is the principle by which, ordinarily, we estimate the various duties of human life, and on which we most effectually urge their discharge upon ourselves and others. Let this standard then be applied to the duty in question, and it will have imparted to it an importance of the first magnitude, for vast and varied are the interests involved in the duty of contending for the truth. There are the paramount honor and glory of Deity,—the peace and purity of the redeemed heritage,—and the welfare of society at large.

The fact, that *truth is the testimony which Jehovah has afforded of himself to his rational and moral creation*, is of itself sufficient to demonstrate the importance of contending for it. In order to perceive the force of this argument, it must previously be observed, that the grand design of the Almighty in all his magnificent operations, is the exhibition of his own glory; this, indeed, is the only object which, in consistency with his own dignity, he could supremely contemplate. Now, this design is accomplished by the display of his perfections and attributes,—by the display of his holiness, and of his equity, and of his power, and of his mercy and truth; and as he unfolds these glorious lineaments before the eye of intelligencies, and affords a scope for their homage and admiration, does he glorify his name and fulfil his pleasure. Now, *the medium by which this display is afforded, must necessarily acquire a character of vast importance*, and become entitled to a prominent and permanent position in the estimation of rational

beings. If the exhibition of the divine perfections, in other words, of the divine glory, be important ; then of corresponding importance, assuredly, must be the medium by which the exhibition is made ; and in exact proportion to the clearness of its revelation, must be its claim upon our attention and regard. And there are various mediums by which Deity has disclosed his character to the children of men. There is the work of creation, for "the heavens declare the glory of God ; and the firmament showeth his handy works." There are the dispensations of a beneficent providence, for "he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons." But it is in the volume of inspiration that we are presented with a lucid display of Deity. Indited by that Spirit, who has proceeded from both the Father and Son, and searches all things, yea the deep things of God ; it unfolds the divine character in all the fulness and brightness of its lineaments,—in all its majesty and honor,—in all its excellencies and perfections,—in all the aspects and relations it has to the children of men, together with the magnificent designs and arrangements, which from all eternity were planned on their behalf. The meagre outline which the volume of nature furnishes of the Supreme Being, is in the volume of inspiration completed ; and instead of the indistinct and uncertain impression left by the one, there are the most lucid and enlarged discourses supplied by the other. If truth, then, be a display of the nature and will of the Eternal, it is due, that it be contended for and maintained. The most solemn obligations enforce the duty. It is not merely a matter of expediency, it is a matter of imperative duty,—it is not simply a matter of choice, it is a matter of supreme right. Is it not of importance, that the knowledge of Him, who is the holiest, the best, and wisest of Beings, should be preserved and perpetuated among his rational creatures ? Then it must be of importance to contend for the truth. Is it of importance, that the glory of the Almighty creator and munificent benefactor of all creatures,—of our supreme governor and judge, in whom all our hopes centre, and from whom all our blessings flow, should be perpetuated at his footstool ? It must be of lasting importance to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.—Either the truth must be contended for, or the divine character blinked,—either the truth must be maintained, or the divine glory dis-

carded ; let therefore the intelligent and rational offspring of the Deity, they who have been called to existence, in order to keep forward the display of his honor, and who are placed under every obligation, that right, and law, and gratitude can impose, say, which alternative they are bound to pursue.

But in addition to this, let it be observed, that *the truth has been committed to the guardianship of the church*. In virtue of their moral relation to God, his witnesses are bound to the performance of the duty in question ; but being constituted by Jehovah, the guardians of truth, and the vehicle by which it is to be transmitted to an unborn generation, the importance of contending for it, presses upon them with accumulated force. In their character are embodied the principles of this sacred trust, and by their profession and conduct, are they to exemplify them before the world.—Consecrated for the service of the Redeemer, they are to stand forth the intrepid witnesses of his cause, and to lift up an unflinching testimony against the opposing ranks of error and vice ; and rallying around the banner of the divine testimony, they are to bear it aloft, and wave it with a free and graceful air before the eyes of a careless world. To them is entrusted the advocacy of the cause of heaven,—the vindication of the purity and boundary of truth, and its unimpaired transmission to posterity,—“ For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children.” Such is the important character with which the church is invested,—a witness for God,—a guardian,—a repository of divine truth. Such is the responsible trust deposited with the church,—it is the testimony of God,—it is the system of divine truths,—it is the glory and honor of the Almighty. And if the children of men are so faithful to charges of an inferior nature,—if earthly titles, and earthly honors, and earthly possessions, are by them, watched over with so much care,—contended for with so much ardor,—and retained with so much pertinacity,—shall not the children of Sion bring their whole energies to their struggles for truth ?

But the glory of God uniformly blends with the interests of mankind ; and this case forms no exception, for the character of our apostate race is both reclaimed and perfected by means of the truth, which forms no inconsiderable ingredient in the importance of contending for it. Miserable was

the plight into which our world was plunged, on the occasion of its apostacy. Darkness, deep and sullen, at that moment enveloped its inhabitants; and as they travelled on in their dreary course, they were involving themselves deeper and deeper in the mazes of ignorance and error. No ray of light fell upon their winding path,—no distant gleam announced their arrival at regions more lightsome; and as might be expected, the doomed race were bringing forth in rank profusion the fruits of darkness, and sinking deeper and deeper in misery and wo. Their affections became alienated from the God that made them, and their energies were perverted to the lowest and foulest purposes; in the meanwhile, their passions, broken loose from every restraint, rioted in every species of excess, and impelled to every deed of recklessness and wrong, till of the creation which emanated pure and virtuous from the hand of God, there remained only a wretched and desolate ruin. Such was the dismal aspect, which our race for centuries presented to the eye of holy benevolence, and every successive generation seemed to outstrip the preceding in the enormity of its wickedness, and in the extremity of its wretchedness; nor did there lie within the compass of human means, a remedy adequate to counteract this accumulated misery, and recover man to his original position. A variety of means, indeed, were brought to ply upon the moral character of mankind, with the fond, but alas! delusive hope of ameliorating their condition; but the result in every single instance was an entire failure. Philosophy in all its pomp and splendor,—philosophy as taught by Socrates, and Seneca, and Plato, those master-minds of antiquity—and science, and eloquence, and poetry, and civil government, and laws, were for centuries, and that too under the most favorable circumstances, brought to bear upon mankind, but were attended by no beneficent effect; human corruption was accumulated, and just as mankind were advancing in the light of science, and becoming refined by the influence of literature, did they plunge deeper in moral crime and pollution. Amid these unavailing applications, was revealed the truth of inspiration, which speedily demonstrated itself to be the power of God to human salvation. Yes, truth, divine truth, is the alone ordained and adapted means to reclaim our fallen race. This is the light which heaven has lowered down amid this darkened earth, to direct the paths of its inhabitants to the good land of up-

rightness. This, as a means, possesses the gracious influences, by which the hardened heart of depravity is softened down to penitential emotions, and the fiercest dispositions swayed into cordial submission. This possesses the sanctifying influences, by which new principles of action are imparted to the soul, and its susceptibilities and pursuits are transformed. This contains the consoling influences, by which the believing soul is sustained amid all its difficulties,—soothed amid its sorrows,—and cheered in its chequered path, till it has reached the consummation of its happiness, in the regions of bliss. Such being the beneficial influence, which the truth exerts over the interests of mankind, over their purity and virtue, their peace and their joy, their eternal and inestimable welfare ; it becomes a duty of first-rate importance to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

(To be continued.)

CHRONOLOGICAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE COVENANTED CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND.

The conduct of James the sixth, in relation to the church, involved it in difficulty ; and prevented, for a long time, the developement of the principles of the reformation, as was designed by the reformers. This prince had been educated with great care, and promised by this advantage to be a wise and prudent ruler. But the fond hopes which had been entertained of his government were grievously disappointed. His imbecility being equalled only by his high notions of the royal prerogative, he dreaded the influence of Presbyterianism upon his royal pretensions. In these wicked, as well as unwise pretensions of extravagant power, he was encouraged by the indiscreet and selfish counsels of his favorites, particularly those of the unprincipled and profligate Earl of Arran, who, for a time, directed the judgment and conscience of this pitiful representative of Scottish royalty.

By the adoption of the Second Book of Discipline, the Presbyterian form of church government had been settled by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The adoption of the principle of Presbyterian parity among the min-

isters of the gospel, excluded the order of bishops—scriptural bishops being identified with pastors of congregations. This levelling of the Episcopal order must have been very offensive to James, whose maxim, afterwards avowedly acted upon, was, “no bishop no king.” The independence claimed for the church was still more offensive to this Erastian and illiberal prince, whose aim was to direct the movements of the church as he did those of the state. The Second Book of Discipline asserts the principle that the “power ecclesiastical flows immediately from God, and the Mediator Jesus Christ; and is spiritual, not having a temporal head on earth, but only Christ, the only spiritual King and Governor of his Kirk. It is a title falsely usurped by anti-christ, to call himself Head of the Kirk, and ought not to be attributed to angel nor man, of what estate soever he be, saving to Christ the only Head and Monarch of the Kirk. It is Christ’s proper office to command and rule his kirk universal, and every particular kirk through his spirit and word, by the ministry of men. Notwithstanding, as ministers and others of the ecclesiastical estate are subject to the magistrate civil, so ought the person of the magistrate to be subject to the kirk spiritually, and in ecclesiastical government.” It is easy to see that such scriptural sentiments must have been abhorred by a man of James’ narrow views, whose sole ambition was the extension of the royal prerogative. Accordingly an attempt was made to force the leading Presbyterians to submit to his authority in spiritual things. The celebrated Andrew Melville was one of the first selected upon whom this experiment was tried. Determined not to submit, he was “compelled, in order to save his life, to leave the kingdom.” The court proceeded in the most unconstitutional manner to destroy the religious liberty of the church. Dr. Cook, the historian of the Reformation, though a professed Presbyterian, yet not remarkable for his liberality of sentiment, or partiality to the reformers of that period, says, “The temper of the clergy, and the undisguised manner in which they avowed their principles, increased the aversion with which James, notwithstanding his occasional professions, had constantly viewed the popular assemblies and the free discussions of the Presbyterians, and not contenting himself with acts of severity against the individual ministers who offended him, he resolved to apply to parliament for statutes to restrain the freedom of discourse, and to strengthen

Episcopacy, which appeared to be so much more favorable to the royal prerogative. Accordingly, in a parliament which was held in the course of this year (1534) several very important laws, deeply affecting the church, were enacted. The first of these was entitled, an act confirming the kings majesty's royal power over all estates and subjects within the realm, and was intended to compel the ministers to submit in all cases to the jurisdiction of the king, and the council, which in ecclesiastical matters, they had of late uniformly refused to do. A second law asserted the authority of the three estates of parliament, evidently with the design of supporting the bishops; and by a third, all jurisdictions and judgments not approved by parliament, and all assemblies and conventions without the king's permission, were prohibited." These high-handed acts, designed to subvert the spiritual independence of the church, and make it the mere tool of state policy, were followed by the most oppressive measures, in order to carry them out into operation. "By these events," says the same writer, "the minds of the people were strongly agitated; suspicions were excited that the king had become hostile even to the reformation itself; and so widely was this disseminated, and so readily believed, that he deemed it prudent or necessary to publish an explanation of his conduct. To remove the aspersions of his being inclined to popery, he subjoined to the explanation several articles with the design of satisfying his subjects that he had nothing more in view than to settle the form and polity of the church. His appeal, however, produced no effect; the passions of men, excited as they had been, were sedulously heightened by many writings admirably adapted to make an impression, and to confirm those unfavorable sentiments of the court which its own ill-judged policy had created." On the same subject, a more liberal writer, the historian Aikman, says, "The only effect which this produced, was to call forth the friends of freedom, justice, and the Presbyterian form of church government to reply, which they did, both in prose and verse; and as they were superior in argument, and their reasonings more congenial to the public feeling, they increased the hatred which all ranks bore to the administration of Arran."

None but the Presbyterian ministers ventured to disapprove of "the black acts," as they were called, though they were destructive of civil as well as ecclesiastical liberty.

The consequence of this was, that a considerable number of them were compelled to leave the country to save themselves from imprisonment, and perhaps death. Ministers of the gospel, and masters of colleges and schools were required to subscribe a bond, by which they engaged to submit to the late acts of parliament, and to acknowledge the bishops as their ecclesiastical superiors, under the penalty of being deprived of their benefices and salaries. To the everlasting honor of Presbyterianism, few of the ministers submitted to this unrighteous demand.

The government of James, though tyrannical, was really weak and feeble. The Presbyterians, aware of this, embraced every opportunity to sustain the truth and carry forward the reformation of the church amidst all the vascillations of the government. The imprudence of those to whom James committed the administration of the government, and his own feebleness, produced a political crisis, which was judiciously improved by the leading Presbyterians who possessed talent, zeal and intrepidity equal to the occasion. Accordingly, at a meeting of the General Assembly, it was determined to petition for a legal establishment of the Presbyterian form of church government, and that the acts which proscribed the liberty of the church should be repealed.

On the 5th June, 1592, parliament met, and the articles prepared by the General Assembly were laid before it. The object of the petitioners was gained. "Thus," says an eminent historian, "was the establishment of Presbytery at length obtained from a prince who hated it with the most rooted antipathy, by the unyielding perseverance with which its supporters pursued their object, amid opposition and persecution, and the admirable dexterity with which they seized every favorable opportunity that occurred for its advancement. At this period the supporters of Presbytery were the asserters of civil liberty. When the parliaments were the mere puppets of the court, and the courts of law,—for they could hardly be called courts of justice,—were subservient to the nod of the kings or their favorites, the church of Scotland maintained the only spirit of independence in the land; and to this, more than their religious tenets, was owing the implacable animosity of James. Had the genius of Presbytery been as congenial to the spirit of despotism as that of prelacy, Scotland would never have been persecuted about bishops." McCrie, in his life of Melville, says, "the act of parliament (1592) repealed several statutes which were favo-

nable to superstition, and hostile to the independence of the kingdom. It gave the friends of the Presbyterian constitution the advantage of occupying legal ground, and enabled them, during a series of years, to oppose a successful resistance to the efforts of the court to obtrude on them an opposite system. The church of Scotland did not regard the present or any other parliamentary grant, as the basis of her religious constitution. This had already been laid down from Scripture in her books of discipline. For all her internal administrations she pleaded and rested upon higher grounds than either royal or parliamentary authority. What she now obtained was a legal recognition of those powers which she had long claimed as belonging to her by scriptural institution, and the gift of her Divine Head. Without entering upon the question of civil establishments of religion, which might be shown to be consonant with the soundest principles of policy and Christianity, I shall only remark, that when the sanction of civil authority is given to a church properly organized and duly reformed, it may prove one of the greatest national blessings, and be no less beneficial to the power which confers it than to the society on which it is conferred. Had the church of Scotland been remiss in her exertions to obtain this sanction, or had she declined to accept it when offered, she would have acted a foolish and a criminal part. The infatuation of such a course would scarcely have been less than that of abolishing all public institutions for education and the promotion of learning through the kingdom, and of leaving the object of these to be gained entirely by individual exertion and voluntary support—a measure which would be preposterous and hurtful at any time, but which, at the period under consideration, would have been productive of ruining and irremediable mischiefs.”

THE COVENANTERS' COMMUNION AT EAST NISBET, IN 1674.

On the banks of the Whitadder, about nine miles from Berwick, and one mile south from Chirnside, lies the beautiful valley where this memorable communion was celebrated. Doubtless the hand of cultivation and the action of the river must have greatly changed its appearance since the period in question. Still it must have afforded a seasonable retreat

to the persecuted wanderers, glad to conceal themselves, even for a few days, from the pursuit of their sanguinary foes ; and grateful for the opportunity of observing in tranquillity, those religious privileges for which they had made the greatest sacrifices. While ejected from their churches, in which they had spent many delightful Sabbaths, and to which they looked back with mingled emotions ; here they found a spacious temple reared by the hands of the Almighty Architect, covered with "the clear blue sky," and secured against the intrusions of the illiterate curates who had been thrust, by military violence, on the parishes from which they had escaped. The number who communicated on the occasion was not less than 3,200. Instead, however, of giving a narrative in our own words, we shall quote the account that was drawn up, soon afterwards, by one of the excellent ministers who officiated on the occasion—the Rev. Mr. Blackadder.

"At the desire of several people in the Merse, Mr. Blackadder, and some other ministers, had resolved on a meeting in Tiviotdale, and day and place were fixed for keeping a communion ; but from apprehensions of danger, this resolution was changed, as it was feared that they might come to imminent hazard. It was agreed to delay it a fortnight ; and advertisement was sent to the people not to assemble. The report of the first appointment had spread throughout the country, and many were prepared to resort thither from distant and divers quarters. This change had occasioned great uncertainty ; and some had taken their journey to the Merse, willing to venture on a disappointment, rather than miss so good an occasion by sitting still. Mr. Blackadder was determined to go, seeing his stay would discourage others ; and if kept back they would blame him. He told them it was not likely the meeting would hold ; yet, lest any should take offence, he was content to take his venture with them. On Friday night he took horse, accompanied with a small body of attendants, and was joined by Mr. John Dickson at the port, who rode with him eleven miles that night. Many people were on the road, setting forward to be in time for sermon on Saturday morning. Not a few bewest of Edinburgh, hearing the report of the delay, remained at home, and others returned on the way. Nobody was certain, either from far or near, till they reached the place ; where they would all have been disappointed, if Providence had

not ordered it better than human arrangement; for the earnest entreaties of the people had prevailed with Mr. Welsh, in the same way as Mr. Blackadder, to venture at a hazard. And had it been delayed a day or two longer, it would have been utterly prevented, as the noise was spread, and the troops would have been dispersed to stop them.

“Meantime the communion elements had been prepared, and the people in Tiviotdale advertised. Mr. Welsh and Mr. Riddle had reached the place on Saturday. When Mr. Blackadder arrived, he found a great assembly, and still gathering from all airts; which was a comfortable surprisal in this uncertainty; whereat they all marvelled, as a new proof of the divine wisdom, wherewith the true Head of the church did order and arrange his solemn occasions. The people from the east brought reports that caused great alarm. It was rumored that the Earl of Hume, as ramp a youth as any in the country, intended to assault the meeting with his men and militia, and that parties of the regulars were coming to assist him. He had profanely threatened to make their horses drink the communion wine, and trample the sacred elements under foot. Most of the gentry there, and even the commonality were ill set.

“Upon this we drew hastily together about seven or eight score of horse on the Saturday, equipped with such furniture as they had. Picquets of twelve or sixteen men were appointed to reconnoitre and ride towards the suspected parts. Single horsemen were despatched to greater distances, to view the country, and give warning in case of attack. The remainder of the horse were drawn round to be a defence at such distance as they might hear sermon, and be ready to act if need be. Every means was taken to compose the multitude from needless alarm, and prevent, in a harmless, defensive way, any affront that might be offered to so solemn and sacred a work. Though many, of their own accord, had provided for their safety; and this was more necessary when they had to stay three days together, sojourning by *the lions' dens and the mountains of leopards*; yet none had come armed with hostile intentions.

“We entered on the administration of the holy ordinance, committing it and ourselves to the invisible protection of the Lord of Hosts, in whose name we were met together. Our trust was in the arm of Jehovah, which was better than weapons of war, or the strength of hills. If the God of

Jacob was our refuge, we knew that our cause would prosper; that in his favor there was more security than in all the defence of art or of nature. The place where we convened was every way commodious, and seemed to have been formed on purpose. It was a green and pleasant haugh; fast by the water side.* On either hand there was a spacious brae, in form of a half round, covered with delightful pasture, and rising with a gentle slope to a goodly height. Above us was the clear blue sky, for it was a sweet and calm Sabbath morning, promising to be indeed one of the days of the Son of Man. There was a solemnity in the place befitting the occasion, and elevating the whole soul to a pure and holy frame. The communion tables were spread on the green by the water, and around them the people had arranged themselves in decent order. But the far greater multitude sat on the brae-face, which was crowded from top to bottom, full as pleasant a sight as was ever seen of that sort. Each day, at the congregation's dismissing, the ministers, with their guards, and as many of the people as could, retired to their quarters in three several country towns, where they might be provided with necessaries for man and horse for payment.

"Several of the yeoman refused to take money for their provisions, but cheerfully and abundantly invited both ministers and gentlemen each day at dismissing.† The horsemen drew up in a body till the people left the place, and then marched in goodly array behind at a little distance, until all were safely lodged in their quarters; dividing themselves in three squadrons, one for each town where were their respective lodgments. Each party had its own commander. Watches were regularly set in empty barns, and other out-houses, where guards were placed during the night. Scouts were sent to look about, and get intelligence. In the morning, when the people returned to the meeting, the horsemen accompanied them: all the three parties met, a mile from the spot, and marched in a full body to the consecrated ground. The congregation being all fairly settled

* The Whitadder.

† Mr. Blackadder's host, on this occasion, was one Turnbull, "a good yeoman," who entertained both him and the principal gentlemen all the time most hospitably, and without any recompense.—*Black. Mem. MSS. Adv. Lib.*

in their places, the guardsmen took their several stations as formerly.

“ These accidental volunteers seemed to have been the gift of Providence, and they secured the peace and quiet of the audience; for from Saturday morning, when the work began, until Monday afternoon, we suffered not the least affront or molestation from enemies, which appeared wonderful. At first there were some apprehension; but the people sat undisturbed, and the whole was closed in as orderly a way as it had been in the time of Scotland's brightest noon. And, truly, the spectacle of so many grave, composed, and devout faces, must have struck the adversaries with awe, and been more formidable than any outward ability of fierce looks and warlike array. We desired not the countenance of earthly kings; there was a spiritual and divine Majesty shining on the work, and sensible evidence that the Great Master of assemblies was present in the midst. It was indeed the doing of the Lord, who covered us a table in the wilderness, in presence of our foes, and reared a pillar of glory between us and the enemy, like the fiery cloud of old, that separated between the camp of Israel and the Egyptians, encouraging to the one, but dark and terrible to the other. Though our vows were not offered within the courts of God's house, they wanted not sincerity of heart, which is better than the reverence of sanctuaries. Amidst the lonely mountains, we remembered the words of our Lord, that true worship was not peculiar to Jerusalem or Samaria: that the beauty of holiness consisted not in consecrated buildings, or material temples. We remembered the ark of the Israelites, which had sojourned for years in the desert, with no dwelling-place but the tabernacles of the plain. We thought of Abraham, and the ancient patriarchs, who laid their victims on the rocks for an altar, and burnt sweet incense under the shade of the green tree.

The ordinance of the last supper, that memorial of his dying love till his second coming, was signally countenanced, and backed with power and refreshing influence from above. Blessed be God, for he hath visited and confirmed his heritage when it was weary. In that day, Zion put on the beauty of Sharon and Carmel; the mountains broke forth into singing, and the desert place was made to bud and blossom as the rose. Few such days were seen in the desolate Church of Scotland, and few will ever witness

the like. There was a rich and plentiful effusion of the Spirit shed abroad on many hearts. Their souls filled with heavenly transports, seemed to breathe in a diviner element, and to burn upwards, as with the fire of a pure and holy devotion. The ministers were visibly assisted to speak home to the conscience of the hearers. It seemed as if God had touched their lips with a live coal from his altar, for they who witnessed declared, they carried more like ambassadors from the court of heaven, than men cast in earthly mould.

None were admitted without tokens, as usual, which were distributed on the Saturday, but only to such as were known to some of the ministers, or persons of trust, to be free of public scandals. All the regular forms were gone through: the communicants entered at one end, and retired at the other,—a way being kept clear to take their seats again on the hill-side. Mr. Welsh preached the action sermon, and served the first two tables, as he was ordinarily put to do on such occasions: the other four ministers, Mr. Blackadder, Mr. Dickson, Mr. Riddel, and Mr. Rae, exhorted the rest in their turn: the table service was closed by Mr. Welsh, with solemn thanksgiving; and solemn it was, and sweet and edifying to see the gravity and composure of all present, as well as all parts of the service. The communion was peaceably concluded; all the people heartily offering up their gratitude, and singing with a joyful noise to the Rock of their salvation. It was pleasant, as the night fell, to hear their melody swelling in full unison along the hill, the whole congregation joining with one accord, and praising God with the voice of psalms.

SYNODICAL SERMONS.

1. "The rebuilding of Jerusalem, a discourse, delivered at the opening of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod; Glasgow, April 20, 1835, by the Rev. William Symington."

2. "Christ's Headship over all things to the Church, a discourse delivered at the opening of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod; Glasgow, April, 18th, 1836, by the Rev. Peter McIndoe."

It is at all times refreshing to meet with able discussions on leading and important points of christian doctrine and practice; it is doubly so when these points are controverted or betrayed by the greater part

of professors of religion. Such are the discourses noticed above.—The writers of both these Sermons are well known to the christian world by their former labors; and we can unhesitatingly say that both have maintained their acquired character for talent and fidelity to the cause of truth in these sermons. They were delivered on public occasions: namely, the opening of the Scottish Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church, at its sessions of 1835 and 1836. The subjects are well chosen for such occasions; the method of discussion appropriate; and the illustrations felicitous. But, instead of lengthening our own observations, we deem it better to present to our readers specimens of these sermons; only remarking that the passages given are not selected because of their superiority, but because they are well adapted for isolated reading. Nothing short of an entire perusal of these discourses can give any thing like a fair view of them.

Mr. Symington has selected for his text Neh. ii. 17-20—"Then said I unto them, ye see the distress we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire," &c. The writer introduces himself very happily to his subject by referring to the peculiar circumstances of the church at the period spoken of in the text, concluding his introductory remarks by an equally happy allusion to the condition of the church in the British Empire. The last of these remarks is pointed and vigorous: "A desperate struggle remains to be made before she [the church] regain her former influence and dignity. And as this struggle would seem destined to take place in opposition, as of old, to both the lukewarmness of treacherous friends and the fierce assault of avowed enemies, the appeal and remonstrance of good Nehemiah have strong claims upon our attention at the present time." The following is the plan of the discourse: "Three things here demand consideration: The *work* in which Nehemiah and his associates were engaged—the *opposition* they encountered in performing it—and the *resistance* which they made to this opposition."

The first remark on the first head is, that "the church of Christ, in our day, may be fitly represented under the emblem of a dilapidated city," respecting which the writer says, "The doctrines of the church which, as lofty and pointing heavenward, may be compared to towers, are greatly corrupted and neglected. The trinity, the divinity of Christ, the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit, atonement by the blood of Emmanuel, justification by faith in the righteousness of the Redeemer, the nature and necessity of regeneration, the power and efficacy of the Spirit—these and other vital parts of the christian faith have been long much opposed and overlooked. The strong and massive towers of the city of the Lord, so to speak, have been thrown down, and a paltry plaster-work of Arianism, Arminianism, Pelagianism, and false Philosophy, substituted in their room. The government and discipline of the church, which may correspond to the bulwarks of the city, as being the means of safety and defence, are also greatly impaired. Loose sentiments prevail regarding even the nature and importance of ecclesiastical government; all forms are con-

considered alike Scriptural; or rather, the Scriptures are considered as not giving their sanction to any one form in particular, but leaving this to be fixed as time and other circumstances may seem to render expedient, while the goodly structure of Presbyterianism, reared by the zeal and piety of our ancestors, according to the word of God, has been either violently broken up, or allowed to go greatly to waste. By a partial or total prostration of discipline, the privileges and immunities of Jerusalem have been thrown open to every unprincipled intruder. 'The hedges have been broken down, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her: the boar out of the wood doth waste it; and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.' The ordinances of ecclesiastical fellowship may be represented by the 'palaces of the city,' as being the medium of intercourse betwixt Christ, the King and Head of the church, and the members of his mystical body or subjects of his spiritual kingdom. By means of these, the most close, sweet, and enobling communion is enjoyed, fitted to promote the edification, joy, comfort, and peace of the inhabitants of Zion. These palaces of our Jerusalem are, in the present day, greatly defiled. Vague conceptions respecting the nature and necessity of creeds and confessions, spurious dogmas about general saintship, and consequent notions of Catholic communion, have given rise to such an indiscriminate admission to sealing ordinances as is at once hurtful to the purity, and, in a great degree, subversive of the ends of ecclesiastical fellowship; being calculated, not only to lead to a profanation of holy things, but to go far to obliterate the distinction which it is most important to maintain between the church and the world,—on these accounts may the church in our day be fitly compared to a dilapidated city—there are many breaches in her walls, and, as the necessary result, her stately towers and royal palaces are humbled and polluted."

Having stated that "human efforts" must be made for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, that "persons of all classes are bound to exert themselves on behalf of the church," the writer notices specially that "ministers of religion" and "civil magistrates" are bound to, and may be of service in repairing the wastes of Jerusalem, and says of the latter, "They can protect the church in the enjoyment of her privileges and in the exercise of her functions. They can remove external impediments to her growth and purification. They can restrain and punish open blasphemy, Sabbath desecration, and gross immorality. They can see to the erection of places of public worship, and to the adequate support of qualified functionaries, that all classes may have an opportunity of participating in the benefits of true religion, the influence of which is so interwoven with the real prosperity, peace, dignity, and virtue of a nation."

Exhorting the friends of Zion not to be deterred from the work of rebuilding Jerusalem, from the circumstance that they are few in number, the writer remarks, "The success that has attended the single efforts of a Wickliffe, a Luther, and a Knox, may well encourage others to proceed, even single-handed. A right spirit is of far more

importance than great numbers." This he illustrates by a beautiful allusion to the case of Gideon. And, then adds, "Thus are we taught to see that a society, by being numerically diminished, may be actually increased in moral strength and influence. Thus do we learn to weigh purity, and courage, and zeal against numbers; to look to quality more than to quantity for success in the work of the Lord. Let us not then be faint-hearted because of the small number of those who espouse the cause of true reformation in the church; rather let the few look well to their own character, and principles, and conduct; let them only be faithful, and active, and persevering, and they need not despair of ultimate success in building the old wastes, and repairing the desolations of many generations. Is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim, better than the vintage of Abiezer? In the same style and spirit is the discourse illustrated throughout. The application, which, though long, is remarkably pertinent, concludes with the following pithy and soul-stirring passage. "Value more the remains of Scotland's covenanted reformation, for which you are permitted to contend in your present state, than all the gorgeous forms or tempting emoluments of corrupt established systems. O forsake not the city of your God in her waste and desolate condition. Sit down amid her venerable fragments, determined that nothing shall induce you to leave her till she be thoroughly repaired and restored to her pristine glory, magnificence and usefulness. And while you neglect not to work, omit not to pray, but raise to heaven the touching appeal of the captives:—"Our holy and beautiful house where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up with fire, and all our pleasant things laid waste. Wilt thou refrain for these things, O Lord? Wilt thou hold thy peace and afflict us very sore? Arise, O God, and plead thine own cause." (To be continued.)

CALUMNIES OF THE ROMISH PRIESTS AGAINST THE BIBLE.

The evangelical societies of Paris and Geneva continue to send colporteurs into various provinces of France, to distribute there the word of God.

Many facts related in their letters show that the Bible meets with favor among the papists. But this success irritates the priests, who are afraid of seeing the last remnants of their authority fall under the influence of the Bible. Some years ago, when Bibles were less known in France, the priests acted apart, each as his own character and passions prompted him. Now they form, from one end of the kingdom to the other, a sort of association, or conspiracy, to prevent the circulation of the Holy Scriptures. They have a common accusation agreed upon among themselves, and which they all repeat nearly in the same terms. They pretend that Protestants have falsified, mutilated the Bible, adding what does not belong to it, and taking away

what does. "It is no more the Word of God," say they; "you sell false translations, in which you have introduced blasphemies, falsehoods, heresies." Thus write bishops in their pastoral letters, and thus preach curates from the pulpit throughout France. The colporteurs every where meet with people who refuse to purchase the Scriptures, saying: "Your Bibles are not the true Bible!"

It is easy to see why the Romish church adopts and publishes this foul calumny. At first, the priests simply forbade the reading of the Bible, without adding that it was falsified. But this prohibition became disgraceful to them. They were at a loss to justify themselves when reproached with taking away from men the holy Bible given for their instruction. So bad a cause could not be sustained, and often the most docile followers of the priests exclaimed against such injustice. The priests, therefore, changed their ground of dispute with their usual address and perfidy. "Oh! you can read the Bible if you please; we do not hinder you; we highly respect the Word of God; but be on your guard! The Protestant colporteurs bring you books filled with lies, under the title of the Bible!" A convenient calumny, truly, and which would inflict a severe blow upon the labors of Bible Societies, if it were not palpably false. But in this case, as in many others, the calumny falls upon the heads of those who invent it.

At *Toulouse*, one of the most important cities of France, the archbishop having stated, in his pastoral letter, that the translations of the Bible were false, several zealous Christians, pastors and members of consistory, replied, in a spirited pamphlet, that they were ready to hold a conference with priests appointed by the archbishop, to compare their translations with the original text. They solemnly challenged the Romish clergy to accept this offer, or to take back their accusation. The archbishop refused to have the Bibles examined in concurrence with the pastors, well knowing that he could not prove his lie. But this refusal itself has opened the eyes of many Roman Catholics; the pamphlet of the defenders of Protestantism has been read in the whole city of *Toulouse*, and the archbishop has been obliged to keep silence.

Lately, at *St. Quentin*, a city of the north of France, the vicar repeated, in a public discourse, the same calumny. The pastor wrote immediately to this priest, asking him to prove his assertion or retract it. The priest replied that Protestants had cut off the *apocryphal books*, and that this justified him in maintaining that the Bible was falsified. But the pastor showed him, in a second letter, that this answer was not sufficient, because the attack of the Popish preacher was directed against the whole translation, that is to say, against the canonical books as well as the apocryphal books. He again requested him to point out the chapters and verses, and words where the translations appeared incorrect. The curate dared not go farther in this dispute: a new source of confusion to the church of Rome."

ITEMS OF INTELLIGENCE.

Auchterarder Case.—The Commission of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland sat on the 14th and 15th of August, and was fully attended. The case which excited the deepest interest was that of Auchterarder, brought up for advice from the Presbytery. It appeared that the Court of Session had not issued a formal “order” on the Presbytery to proceed to take Mr. Young on trials with the view of his settlement as minister of Auchterarder, but they had done what in a moral estimate was tantamount to this; the Lord Ordinary had found by a solemn interlocutor that the Presbytery were “bound and astricted” to take him on trials, and that they “ought” to do so. Had the Presbytery felt themselves clear as to the line of duty in the case, they would have cheerfully complied, whether the interlocutor had assumed the form of a peremptory order or not. Such an order, indeed, no civil court *can* be entitled to issue. It belongs to the superior *Church* courts alone to issue peremptory precepts to courts inferior, and such precepts were quite familiar to the practice of the Assembly and Commission some fifty, or sixty, or seventy years ago. In the present instance, it does not appear that the Presbytery of Auchterarder found any peculiar *difficulty* in the matter, the minds of the majority being made up as to the line of conscience and of duty; but the case was in substance referred *simpliciter* to the Commission, as being one of general interest to the Church, and one in which the Presbytery had all along acted by, and with advice from, the Supreme Court. It was frivolous, therefore, to make any objections to the reference, and *in fact*, the Commission, in place of giving “advice,” settled the matter by finding it “incompetent” and “a contravention of the fundamental laws of the Church” permanent to entertain the idea of proceeding to the settlement of Mr. Young, and they prohibited the Presbytery from taking any steps therein. Dr. Cook made the motion for an injunction on the Presbytery to take him on trials; Dr. Gordon moved in the terms which carried; and the issue has been a final rejection of the presentee by a sweeping majority of 104 to 23! It is important to remark that the proportion of lay-elders in the division is 41 to 9! thus demonstrating the deep feeling of the influential lay-members as to the vital interests involved in the decision.

British India.—Some of the late numbers of the Puritan, published at Lynn and Salem, Mass., have given an account of a great public meeting held in London, in June last, at which Lord Brougham presided and took an active part, for the purpose of forming a Society for the benefit of the British subjects in India; and also the substance of his Lordship’s address on that occasion. From this address a number of facts are collected, from which it appears manifest that the policy of the British Government towards her possessions in India, is merely to manage their affairs in such a way as to enable her to derive

from that source the greatest possible revenue. The territory in India, subject to the British Crown, embraces 1,100,000 square miles. The native inhabitants, who labor day and night in the cultivation of the soil, are required to yield up to the government about eighteen-twentieths of the income of their lands in the way of rents; and the two-twentieths which they are permitted to retain, they must consider as a boon from the government. It is difficult to understand how such enormous exactions can be enforced, especially under the name of rents, while the government does not pretend to the ownership of the soil. According to the statements of Lord Brougham, the revenue of England drawn from the East Indies, amounts to twenty millions of pounds sterling, fourteen millions of which is derived from the rents and profits of land, and the remainder principally from a monopoly in all the most lucrative mercantile transactions of the country. The East India Company, who are invested with certain chartered rights, and who exercise them, it is said, "with the most unrelenting cruelty," has the entire control of the opium business, for example, including both the cultivation and the traffic. The important article of salt is another of the objects of the oppressive monopoly. "Not a flake of salt," says the account, "which the sun has left by drying up the sea brine upon the land can be gathered up without leave of the company, under a penalty of fifty pounds or two months' imprisonment." The revenue from this source alone, amounts to two millions and a half. Under such a mere mercenary policy, involving an assumption and abuse of power alike abhorrent to the principles of liberty and of humanity, we may well suppose that the people of India would have little occasion to be thankful for their alliance with foreign civilization and Christianity?

Attempt to poison the king of Prussia.—The Jesuits have made an attempt to poison the king of Prussia. Popery is changed—is it?—The archbishop of Posen has a plenary indulgence to take this truly *Protestant* monarch's life by any means. We hope some zealous adherent of the Protestant faith will prevent this. The fight must come, and Prussia nobly leads the way.—*Age.*

Just published, and for sale by Wm. S. Young, 173 Race Street, Philadelphia, Fisher and Erskine's Explanation of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, about 400 pages, duodecimo. Price per dozen, in substantial sheep binding, Eight dollars. Retail price, seventy-five cents.

Same work, on fine paper, and superior binding, nearly 500 pages, duodecimo, Eleven Dollars per dozen. Retail price, One Dollar.

The General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church is to meet in Alleghenytown on the 3rd Tuesday of June next, at 7 o'clock, P. M.

The Southern Presbytery, in Philadelphia, on the 3rd June, at half-past 7 o'clock, P. M.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

JUNE, 1840.

No. IV.

THE FORM OF BAPTISM.

In one of his epistles the Apostle Paul incidentally introduces this remarkable assertion, "Christ sent me not to baptise but to preach the gospel." In these words he certainly assigns a subordinate importance to this divine institution, and represents it as of inferior moment to the preaching of the gospel. The great distinction obviously implied is that the one is essential to the salvation of men, and that the other is not. That the authority and even obligation to administer this holy ordinance was comprehended in his separation to the office of an apostle will hardly be disputed—for he was certainly in that office stationed in the same sphere of power and duty assigned to all the Apostles in the general commission of our Lord, "go teach all nations, *baptising* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And in the same passage first quoted (1 Cor. i.) it appears that he did on some occasions administer this ordinance.—But in these words he clearly detects to us the error of all such as assign an undue importance to baptism, as if it were that regeneration which is essential to entrance into the kingdom of heaven, or essential to salvation, or the want of it attended with unavoidable perdition.

Yet as it is a holy ordinance pertaining to the New Testament, obviously included in those holy ministrations of the Church which Christ enjoined, and which he has promised to own and bless with his presence to the end of the world ; and as the same Apostle speaks at large of its various and important uses in other of his Epistles, it is clear that the neg-

lect, abuse, or misimprovement of it, must be highly sinful and dangerous. And a proper regard to the glorious author of the institution as well as the nature of the institution, justifies us in examining with care all that relates to its due observance and its signification.

Among the misapprehensions entertained on this subject, may be considered as deserving attention the persuasion that *immersion or dipping in water* is essential to its right observance. The singular zeal moreover with which this opinion has been and continues to be urged, together with the acknowledged learning and devotion with which it is sometimes sustained, and the *apparent* countenance it receives from texts of scripture inconsiderately adduced and admitted without examination, make it the more deserving of investigation. It is the object of this brief essay to shew that "dipping of the person into the water is not necessary, but that baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person" baptised. And this will appear from the following considerations.

1. The proper and generic signification of the word employed in the original language of the New Testament in relation to this ordinance. In the Greek testament there are two words very similar in their construction, *Bapto* and *Baptiso*. Of the two, the latter and words derived from it are always employed, whenever reference is made to divine institutions, the former never for that purpose. The former, namely *bapto*, properly and always signifies *immersion or dipping*. Thus Luke xvi, 24, "that he may *dip* the tip of his finger in water." John xiii, 26, "to whom I shall give a sop when I have *dipped* it; and when he had *dipped* the sop." Rev. xix, 13, "And he was clothed with a vesture *dipped* in blood." These are all the places in the New Testament in which this word is used, and in all of them we see it signifies immersion or dipping properly, and can signify nothing else. The same remark may be made of the use of the same word in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, where it is often used in the same peculiar signification; but as this is not of immediate authority I forbear any particular reference or quotation. Now the proper import of the other word is not to apply the object or subject to the element of water, but to apply the element of water to the object or subject.—That the two words have at least a different signification is manifest from the fact that they are two, and not one and the

same ; in no language does it occur that another and a different word is formed and introduced into it, to express one and the same thing with a word already in use and not obsolete, especially when the one is a derivative of the other, as *baptiso* is clearly a derivative of *bapto*. Such an addition to a language is made for the purpose of introducing another and a different idea, and when one word is formed or derived from another, both continuing in use in the same language, the inference is clear and unavoidable that it contains an idea and a meaning somewhat varying from the former although related to it, and is intended to be appropriated to another use. And this distinction remains even when the latter may happen to be used or appropriated to purposes similar to the former. A son who has been educated for and entered upon a calling in life, entirely different from that of his father, may yet be found at times in the occupation of his father ; and that without annulling his own particular calling or making it certain that the one and the other are both the same.

That the words being different, differ in signification, being a plain and reasonable inference, I now proceed to shew that the use of this latter and words derived from it vary from the former. It is often used to signify the act of washing, no way involving of necessity the act of dipping or immersion, but rather the application of water by pouring. Mark vii, 4, "And when they come from the market except they wash (*baptizontai*) they eat not ; and many other things there be which they have received to hold as the washing (baptismous) of cups, and pots, brazen vessels and of tables," (or couches.) Now the act of washing the hands or the face does not require dipping. Elisha is described as the attendant of the prophet Elijah, by this very office, which shews that it was familiarly known among the Jews. "Here is Elisha—who poured water on the hands of Elijah." 2 Kings iii, 11. And that this is its signification properly in the passage just quoted is evident from the washing of "tables," or as it may be translated couches, the *immersion* or *dipping* of which for the purpose of washing is too preposterous to be considered with a grave countenance. Moreover the same word is employed, or its derivative, to signify the ceremonial washings of the Old Testament, which is said to have stood—"in divers washings," (baptismous.) Heb. ix, 10. Now of these nothing is more plain than that a large portion of them consisted of washings by pouring or sprinkling the water ceremonially

used upon the person or thing washed. One referred to by the same writer in the same context (Heb. ix, 13,) is clearly and exclusively the act of sprinkling of the "water of separation," an account of which is contained in Numbers xix, 17, 18. "And a clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water and *sprinkle* it on the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon all the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave. And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water and shall be clean at even." Here the form of washing by applying water to the things and persons is sufficiently plain, and the idea of immersion is no way involved as essential; and even should it be used in the act prescribed of washing clothes, there the immersion takes place not as the act of washing but for the more convenient application of the element of water. And lest any countenance should be supposed to be given by the act of *bathing* prescribed, it may be remarked that the original word is the same as that employed to describe the act of Joseph washing his face, Gen. xliii, 31, and that of washing the chariot of the King of Israel in the pool of Samaria, 1 Kings, xxii, 33; in neither of which cases it is presumed plunging or immersion would be deemed essential to the act of washing.

Various other instances might be referred to, to indicate the form observed in the divers washings (baptismous) of the Old Testament, wherein the principal feature was not the immersion or application of the person or thing to be washed to or into the water, but the application of the water to the person to be washed by pouring or sprinkling. But these are sufficient, and they establish with satisfactory evidence, clear and certain, the uses and signification of the word baptism, and the words formed immediately from it in the original language of the New Testament. And this sufficiently demonstrates that there is nothing in the signification of the original word or words by which the sacred rite of baptism is expressed, to show that dipping of the person to be baptised is any way necessary, but that according to the legitimate, proper, and peculiar meaning of all such words, baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water on the person.

In a future number this conclusion will be further confirmed by the spiritual signification of the form and element used in baptism, and by the facts recorded respecting its observance and administration in the New Testament.

THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF CONTENDING FOR THE TRUTH.

(Continued from p. 81.)

How much do the children of this world outstrip the children of light, in their struggles for vested rights and privileges? How strenuously do they contend for their civil rights and immunities,—for their pleasures and profits? How many battles have been fought,—how much blood has been shed, in their struggles for worldly interests? while the other are remiss in maintaining the truth as it is in Jesus,—an interest infinitely superior. For how insignificant are civil rights and immunities, compared to the privileges and blessings of the Gospel? How paltry is civil liberty, compared to the liberty which the truth confers; and civil possession and honours, apart from the enjoyment of the divine favour, and the hope of endless glory? And yet, we repeat, the professors of religion have frequently manifested a shameful and sinful remissness in their attachment to truth,—conceding most valuable principles,—and frittering it in every form and shape, till at last they retained but the tattered shreds—the empty form of truth. But heavily has such declension been punished by a holy and jealous God, and bitterly have the transgressors been made to wail over their reckless perfidy. Because the churches of Asia relaxed their profession, they have been abandoned to the legitimate fruits of their degeneracy, and the regions where at one time the pure light of the Gospel shed its radiant lustre, are now pervaded with the gloom and sullenness of spiritual death. Because the churches of Germany were unfaithful in their testimony, they have been overrun by the withering influence of Neology, or sunk down amid the morbid apathy of formality. And alas! on the same account, the church of Rome has become the abode of every foul abomination, repulsive and loathsome to the eye

of Jehovah, and rapidly approaching the retributions of his anger.

But another argument in support of our position, is that the church's power is rendered most available at the same time that it is consolidated, by contending for the truth. In contending for the truth, it is not a little interesting that we establish a relationship with the most faithful and most excellent of past generations, and preserve the identity of the church in her outward forms and profession, as well as in the principles and spirit which animate her; and it is not the least advantage that results from the alliance, that the power of the church may not only be employed in supporting the piety and morality of the present day, but may be carried back to the days of other years, and applied to the vindication of the truth, and the confutation of the errors of a past generation. This retrograde extension of her power does not, it is true, affect the generations that are gone, but it may exert a considerable influence upon the present; for the errors and calumnies of a former age are frequently transmitted on record and contribute to the contamination of posterity; and not unfrequently do the men of the present generation, not daring to impugn present principles and present piety, level their shafts at the men and at the principles of other years. But by contending for the truth she carries her power back to the era assailed, and protects the character, and vindicates the principles and measures of the faithful of that age; just as the enemy extends and varies his line of attack does she extend and accommodate her line of defence—proclaiming thus to the world, that her cause is identified with theirs—that had she lived in that period she would have maintained the same principles, sustained the same character, and advocated the same measures. On the same principle, may we press their power into our aid; and go forth in defence of present truth, with the accumulated wisdom, and talent, and piety, and virtue of former ages, in conjunction with our own—an array of power not easily resisted. This ecclesiastical affinity, moreover, affords the church scope for the illustration of the practical working of many of her principles, which otherwise, she could not have. Some of her principles it may not be in her power to carry into effect at every period, such as is at present the case with our own church, in respect to the principles of Ecclesiastical Establishments and of national Covenanting,—but being the lineal descend-

ants of the faithful and pious of former ages, she can refer to their history as an exemplification of the working of the principles in question ; and from that appeal devise an argument to enforce their importance. That her power is consolidated by contending for the truth is what must be obvious to every reflective mind. What is the church's power? Why, the truth that is committed to her, and in contending for it, her powers must be increased ; for it is by truth that she wages war with the unreclaimed portion of mankind, that she reduces their enmity and opposition, and achieves her bloodless and peaceful conquests over them ; and in proportion to the number of truths embraced by her creed will be the number of her aggressive weapons, and if properly wielded will be the extent of their conquest. Hence, we can never expect, that a church with a defective creed can rival in powers of extension, one of scriptural principles ; true, churches of very exceptionable principles have occasionally outstripped the purest in their evangelizing efforts : but it is not, be it observed, the *corrupt part*, but the *spiritual part* of their creed, and that part cultivated with superior activity and application, that is entitled to the merit of success. Her power of defence is likewise strengthened, for truth is her strong fortress—the tower of her salvation—the shield by which she wards off the attacks of her foes, and secures her own stability ; and the larger the amount of her truth, the farther is she removed from error and corruption, and the more difficult to be subjected to their influence. Add to all this, that her inherent energy and character depend very much on the degree of truth comprehended in her profession. What imparts holiness and vitality to a church? It is truth. “Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.” And the larger the compass of truth included in a church's creed the greater number of mediums has the Spirit of grace to communicate himself by, and consequently the more opportunity has that church of increasing in grace and purity, and of bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, which through Christ are to the praise and glory of God. We might have further added, that in contending for the truth the church is cherishing the memory of divine goodness and furnishing herself with topics of praise—that she has opened up to her an extensive field of devout meditation, and has multiplied around her obligations of gratitude and praise ; while she may with stronger confidence repose her trust upon God, and cal-

culate on enlarged communications of his grace. Hence the language of inspired record, "This shall be written for the generation to come, and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord.

ON PSALMODY.

In a matter so important as what shall constitute the matter of our song of praise, something else than human authority must be our guide; yet, it is deserving of consideration that an Assembly so venerable as that which met at Westminster, representing the talent and the piety of Great Britain, after mature consideration, should give its suffrage in favor of a close translation of the inspired Psalms, and should use so much pains and diligence in order to obtain it. It adds weight to this also, that their sentiments were sanctioned by their constituents; and that the Church of Scotland, in her best times, should act deliberately and decidedly on the same principle. At that very interesting period, indeed, the lawfulness, propriety, and duty of using the Psalms of David in the duty of praise seem never to have been questioned. From these worthies, human composition in this duty received no countenance, if indeed it was ever thought of, their sole aim being a translation giving as near as possible the sentiments, the words, and the order of the Holy Spirit.

Unhappily a very different state of sentiment prevails extensively in the Christian church, in the present day. The translation which is the result of the unwearied care and labor of the most venerable Assembly of divines that perhaps ever met on earth, and which was afterwards revised by the combined talents and learning of the Church of Scotland in her judicial Assemblies, and in Commissions appointed by her for this express purpose, has been pronounced by competent judges ever since that time, to be the best that yet exists, — a judgment which cannot be contradicted. And yet, men have arisen, who have discovered, that "they flatten our devotion, often awaken our regret and touch all the springs of uneasiness within us," that "some of these are almost opposite to the spirit of the gospel," that "there are a thousand lines in it, which were not made for a church in our days,"

&c.* The followers of these men consistently enough affect the greatest astonishment that any should be so bigotted or void of taste, as to prefer the Old Psalms to hymns of modern days; and there are hundreds of congregations who would feel themselves utterly insulted were a minister to require them to sing a Psalm of David. If there be any rule in the word of God to guide us in this matter, it is impossible that sentiments so opposed to each other can both be agreeable to it. If Watts and other advocates of human Psalmody, and the churches who act upon the principles advocated by them are right, then the Westminster Assembly, the General Assemblies and Presbyteries and Commissions of the Church of Scotland and all who act upon their principles, must have been in a very serious error. On the contrary, if these be right, the others must be wrong. What is truth and duty on this important point, calls for the serious consideration of every man, who would be accepted of God in the sacrifice of praise.

If praise be an ordinance of God, it surely ought to be observed according to the order that God has appointed in his word. If the scriptures give not sufficient directions on this point, then the man of God is not "fully furnished unto every good work;" but if they do, it is the duty of every one to endeavour to ascertain and to walk by this rule. Is it too much to say, that it is only in so far as persons do so, that they can be accepted of God, and that every thing else, how much soever it please the fancy, will be accounted "strange fire," and be repelled with the confounding question, "Who hath required this at your hand?" What then is the mind of the Spirit?

1. It is abundantly evident that the Old Testament Church in her book of Psalms had an inspired Psalmody, and there is no satisfactory evidence that any other than inspired songs were ever used with approbation in the service of praise, under that economy. It follows then, from this, that if the church is now reduced to use, in this sublime exercise, the feeble and often erroneous conceptions of erring and sinful man, her privileges in this respect are greatly diminished.

2. There is no satisfactory evidence that the book of Psalms is set aside under the present dispensation, from being the

*See Watt's Preface to the 1st Edition of his *Imitation of the Psalms of David*.

matter of our praise. It formed no part of the ceremonial law given by Moses, and therefore, could not be removed by the abolition of that law. No hint is given by Christ or his apostles that they were to be set aside, and another system adopted in their room. No new book of inspired Psalms had been furnished to the New Testament Church, and when the service of praise is spoken of, it is in such a way as evidently takes for granted that the book of Psalms is still continued as the matter of Zion's songs. If this then is granted, and we think none will call it in question, then it follows that in using these as the matter of our praise, we are performing a duty for which we have the divine warrant and approbation; and that in discharging this duty in a right manner, we shall be accepted of God.

3. There is no testimony whatever in the scriptures in favor of human compositions in the duty of praise. That inspired songs were used with approbation by divine appointment is certain,—that any others, were ever used, we have no evidence, and have no right to assume it as a fact that such were used. Both before and after the days of David, such occasional songs of praise as are recorded, are allowed to be the dictates of inspiration. If ever any others were used, than those which are recorded, (a supposition which, though not altogether improbable, cannot be affirmed on the testimony of scripture,) it were affirmation without proof, nay, with weighty probabilities against it, to say that they were not inspired as well as the others. And here it is surely saying the least, that if inspired songs only were used on all occasions mentioned in scripture, it ought not to be asserted without the most unquestionable evidence, that uninspired odes were used on any other occasions.

We are aware it has been argued in favour of human compositions, that if it be warrantable for us to make use of our own words and conceptions in the duty of prayer, why not in that of praise? A very short answer might be given to this question and to the argument contained in it. We have the clear expressions of the divine will authorising the one; we have nothing of the kind authorising the other; and this is enough for the man who bows to the authority of God in his word, and seeks no farther for a warrant for his faith and practice. But if we view this fact more closely, instead of favouring the practice we oppose, it will be found to throw all its weight into the opposite scale. Even in prayer, which

is "an offering up of the desires of *our hearts* unto God for things agreeable to his will," "we know not what to pray for as we ought." In such a case, we must despair forever of offering up, of ourselves, an acceptable service in this duty. But here is the remedy. The Spirit as the spirit of grace and supplication, is promised to help our infirmities, to make intercession within us and to lead us into the knowledge of those things for which we ought to pray: and by his assistance alone, can any child of God present a supplication that God will hear. Possessing this assistance, however, every christian is fully furnished for this duty without the use of set forms; and therefore, no book of forms of prayer is furnished us in the Scripture. The case is different with respect to the duty of praise. If we cannot of ourselves, offer up the desires of our hearts to God, nor know what to pray for as we ought, much less can we ascribe unto God in our dark and feeble and erring conceptions, the glory of what *he* is who is unsearchable, or of *his* ways which are past finding out.— Besides this, there is no promise of the Spirit as the Spirit of praise, to enable us to compose a psalm or a hymn of our own, as there is of him in the character of the Spirit of prayer. And if there be no promise of him in this character, then have we no warrant to pray for his assistance in such a work and no reason to expect it; nay, we have good reason to believe it will never be granted. How then are we to be fully furnished unto the duty of praise? Here is our furniture—God has given us a book of praise indited by him "who searcheth all things and perfectly knows the deep things of God," and the Spirit is promised to lead the true worshipper into the knowledge and legitimate use of all the truth which he has indited in the scripture. And having this, who will say that it is not sufficient? Thus, then, stands the case.—Insufficient of ourselves for the duty of prayer, the Spirit is promised to teach us what to pray for, and how to pray for it as we ought, affording a satisfactory argument, that we are not to be indebted to set forms for the matter of our prayers; and this is confirmed by the fact that no set forms are furnished or authorised by the scripture. But on the contrary that equally incapable of performing of ourselves the equally difficult and important duty of praise, no assistance is promised to aid in forming our psalms or hymns, nor any authority for such a work; affording an argument still more satisfactory, that we ought not to attempt it. And this

is confirmed by the fact, that a book of Psalms, indited by the divine Spirit, appointed by divine authority, and used with divine approbation, is furnished to us in the Scriptures. Oh how daring, how presumptuous and rebellious, to set these aside and to substitute in their room, the effusions of fallen, sinful, conceited man, as better calculated to declare the high praises of the unsearchable God !

But, let us look into the New Testament Scriptures, and see if there is any thing to warrant the use of human compositions in the praise God. And here it is worthy of remark, that there is comparatively but little said in them respecting the duty or matter of praise, and what is said, is such as manifestly takes it for granted, that the matter of the duty was established and well understood, and that no change was then introduced, affording strong auxiliary testimony, that as the inspired Psalms were the matter of the church's praise at the commencement of the present dispensation, they, and no other, are still authorized. We shall barely glance at the passages on this subject, to see what arguments they furnish for the use of uninspired songs in the praise of God. In Mat. xxvi. 30, and Mark xvii 26, we are told that "when they (Christ and his disciples) had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives." And in Acts xvi. 25, that "Paul and Silas sang praises in the prison." None of these passages surely countenance the use of human compositions. In Luke xix. 39, we are told that "the multitude began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice," and the following verse distinctly intimates, that the matter of their song was the words of inspiration. The passages on which the most stress is laid by the advocates of human composition, are Eph. v. 19—"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts unto the Lord." Col. iii. 16—"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord," and James v. 13—"Is any merry? let him sing psalms." Now, on all these passages it might be sufficient to remark, that unless there be something in them which renders it impossible that the inspired writers in these directions should mean the psalms and hymns of inspiration, nothing is made out from them in favor of any other. This, indeed, has been attempted, but without success ; and the result of the attempt

has only been a demonstration of the weakness of the cause and the zeal of its advocates. The argument from the use of the words, "hymns and spiritual songs," has been of necessity abandoned by all sensible men, who know the meaning of the terms. And one is really at a loss to know whether the pretence, that in using the inspired Psalms we would not be "letting the word of Christ dwell in us," is the result of sheer ignorance or of wilful misrepresentation. Are they not the *very word* of Christ, dictated by his Spirit, and which have Christ himself, and the glorious work he came to perform, together with the providential preparations of God for its accomplishment, and prophetic declarations of its glorious results, as the grand sum and substance of the whole? Which—let the candid reader answer,—may with the most propriety be termed "the word of Christ"—the Psalms of David, or the best productions of the very best of uninspired men? The christian will be at no loss for an answer. On the whole, then, we are warranted in affirming, that the testimony of these passages, is more in favor of the Psalms of David, than of any human compositions whatever—that there is nothing in them from which it can with certainty be inferred, that ever Psalms of human composition were authorized, or even existed. On the contrary, it is just such language as the writers of the Scriptures were likely to use, on the supposition, which is the true one, that they intended to enjoin a diligent and proper use of the Psalms, which God had provided for his church.

If, then, there is no authority in the scriptures for the use of human compositions in the praise of God, very little respect ought to be paid to any argument for this, derived from the history of the early ages of Christianity. Even if it were clearly made out, that very early in the Christian church, compositions of this kind were in use, while unsupported by scripture authority, it will only prove, that very early, errors and corruptions began to prevail, and that then, as well as now, there were men conceited enough to imagine, that the effusions of their own minds were better adapted to express the praises of God, than the inspired songs which he himself appointed for this purpose.

(To be continued.)

JOHN KNOX'S SERMON BEFORE QUEEN MARY.

Any thing from the pen of Scotland's Reformer, the venerable and immortal Knox, cannot but prove interesting to the friends of that Reformation, which, under God, he was so remarkably successful in accomplishing. The Sermon which we insert in our pages, besides its intrinsic excellence and worth, derives great interest from the occasion on which it was delivered, as well as from the consequences to which it led. For the information of those who may not be acquainted with the circumstances attending its delivery, we subjoin the following extract from a late edition of the select works of Knox :—

Henry Darnley (king of Scotland by his marriage with queen Mary,) went sometimes to mass with the queen, and sometimes attended the protestant sermons. To silence the rumors then circulated of his having forsaken the reformed religion, he, on the 19th of August, 1565, attended service at St. Giles's church, sitting on a throne which had been prepared for him. Knox preached that day on Isaiah xxvi. 13, 14, and happened to prolong the service beyond the usual time.— In one part of the sermon he quoted these words of scripture, 'I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them ; children are their oppressors, and women rule over them.' In another part he referred to God's displeasure against Ahab, because he did not correct his idolatrous wife Jezebel. No particular application of these passages was made by Knox, but the king considered them as reflecting upon the queen and himself, and returned to the palace in great wrath. He refused to dine and went out to hawking.

The same afternoon Knox was summoned from his bed to appear before the council. He went accompanied by several respectable inhabitants of the city. The secretary informed him of the king's displeasure at his sermon, and desired that he would abstain from preaching for fifteen or twenty days. Knox answered, that he had spoken nothing but according to his text, and if the church would command him either to preach or abstain, he would obey so far as the word of God would permit him. The king and queen left Edinburgh during the week following, and it does not appear that Knox was actually suspended from preaching.

The following are Knox's reasons for the publication of this sermon, extracted from his preface to the first edition.

If any will ask, To what purpose this sermon is set forth ? I answer, To let such as satan has not altogether blinded, see upon how small

occasions great offence is now conceived. This sermon is it, for which, from my bed, I was called before the council; and after long reasoning, I was by some forbidden to preach in Edinburgh, so long as the king and queen were in town. This sermon is it, that so offends such as would please the court, and will not appear to be enemies to the truth; yet they dare affirm, that I exceeded the bounds of God's messenger. I have therefore faithfully committed unto writing whatsoever I could remember might have been offensive in that sermon, to the end, that the enemies of God's truth, as well as the professors of the same, may either note unto me wherein I have offended, or at the least cease to condemn me before they have convinced me by God's manifest word.

ISAIAH XXVI. 13, 14, 15, 16, &c.—O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.

They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise; therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.

Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, thou hast increased the nation, thou art glorified; thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.

Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them, &c.

As the skilful mariner (being master) having his ship tossed with a vehement tempest, and contrary winds, is compelled, oft to traverse, lest that by either too much resisting to the violence of the waves, his vessel might be overwhelmed; or by too much liberty granted, might be carried whither the fury of the tempest would, so that his ship should be driven upon the shore, and make shipwreck; even so doth our prophet Isaiah in this text, which now you have heard read. For he, foreseeing the great desolation that was decreed in the council of the Eternal, against Jerusalem and Judah, namely, that the whole people, that bare the name of God, should be dispersed; that the holy city should be destroyed; the temple wherein was the ark of the covenant, and where God had promised to give his own presence, should be burnt with fire; and the king taken, his sons in his own presence murdered, his own eyes immediately after be put out; the nobility, some cruelly murdered, some shamefully led away captives; and finally, the whole seed of Abraham rased, as it were, from the face of the earth. The prophet, I say, fearing these horrible calamities, doth, as it were, sometimes suffer himself, and the people committed to his charge, to be

carried away with the violence of the tempest, without further resistance than by pouring forth his and their dolorous complaints before the majesty of God, as in the 13th, 17th, and 18th verses of this present text we may read. At other times he valiantly resists the desperate tempest, and pronounces the fearful destruction of all such as trouble the church of God ; which he pronounces that God will multiply even when it appears utterly to be exterminated. But because there is no final rest to the whole body till the Head return to judgment, he exhorts the afflicted to patience, and promises a visitation whereby the wickedness of the wicked shall be disclosed, and finally recompensed in their own bosoms.

These are the chief points of which, by the grace of God, we intend more largely at this present to speak ;

First, The prophet saith, "O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have ruled us."

This, no doubt, is the beginning of the dolorous complaint, in which he complains of the unjust tyranny that the poor afflicted Israelites sustained during the time of their captivity. True it is, that the prophet was gathered to his fathers in peace, before this came upon the people ; for a hundred years after his decease the people were not led away captive ; yet he, foreseeing the assurance of the calamity, did beforehand indite and dictate unto them the complaint, which afterward they should make. But at the first sight it appears, that the complaint has but little weight ; for what new thing was it, that other lords than God in his own person ruled them, seeing that such had been their government from the beginning ? For who knows not, that Moses, Aaron, and Joshua, the Judges, Samuel, David, and other godly rulers, were men, and not God ; and so other lords than God ruled them in their greatest prosperity.

For the better understanding of this complaint, and of the mind of the prophet, we must, *first*, observe from whence all authority flows ; and, *secondly*, to what end powers are appointed by God : which two points being discussed, we shall better understand what lords and what authority rule beside God, and who they are in whom God and his merciful presence rules.

The *first* is resolved to us by the words of the apostle, saying, "There is no power but of God." David brings in the eternal God speaking to judges and rulers, saying, "I have

said, ye are gods, and sons of the Most High." (Psal. lxxxii.) And Solomon, in the person of God, affirmeth the same, saying, "By me kings reign, and princes decree the things that are just." From which place it is evident, that it is neither birth, influence of stars, election of people, force of arms, nor finally, whatsoever can be comprehended under the power of nature, that makes the distinction betwixt the superior power and the inferior, or that establishes the royal throne of kings; but it is the only and perfect ordinance of God, who willet his terror, power and majesty, partly to shine in the throne of kings, and in the faces of judges, and that for the profit and comfort of man. So that whosoever would study to deface the order of government that God has established, and allowed by his holy word, and bring in such a confusion, that no difference should be betwixt the higher powers and the subjects, does nothing but avert and turn upside down the very throne of God, which he wills to be fixed here upon earth; as in the end and cause of this ordinance will more plainly appear: which is the *second* point we have to observe, for the better understanding of the prophet's words and mind.

The end and cause then, why God imprints in the weak and feeble flesh of man this image of his own power and majesty, is not to puff up flesh in opinion of itself; neither yet that the heart of him, that is exalted above others, should be lifted up by presumption and pride, and so despise others; but that he should consider that he is appointed lieutenant to One, whose eyes continually watch upon him, to see and examine how he behaves himself in his office. Paul, in few words, declares the end wherefore the sword is committed to the powers, saying, "It is to the punishment of the wicked doers, and unto the praise of such as do well." Rom. xiii.

Of which words it is evident, that the sword of God is not committed to the hand of man, to use it as pleases him, but only to punish vice and maintain virtue, that men may live in such society as is acceptable before God. And this is the true and only cause why God has appointed powers in this earth.

For such is the furious rage of man's corrupt nature, that, unless severe punishment were appointed and put in execution upon malefactors, better it were that man should live among brutes and beasts than among men. But at this present I dare not enter into the description of this common-

place; for so should I not satisfy the text, which by God's grace I purpose to explain. This only by the way—I would that such as are placed in authority should consider, whether they reign and rule by God, so that God rules them; or if they rule without, besides, and against God, of whom our prophet here complains.

If any desire to take trial of this point, it is not hard; for Moses, in the election of judges, and of a king, describes not only what persons shall be chosen to that honour, but also gives to him that is elected and chosen, the rule by which he shall try himself, whether God reign in him or not, saying, "When he shall sit upon the throne of his kingdom, he shall write to himself an exemplar of this law, in a book, by the priests and Levites; it shall be with him, and he shall read therein, all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, and to keep all the words of his law, and these statutes, that he may do them; that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left." Deut. xvii.

The same is repeated to Joshua, in his inauguration to the government of the people by God himself, saying, "Let not the book of this law depart from thy mouth, but meditate in it day and night, that thou mayest keep it, and do according to all that which is written in it. For then shall thy way be prosperous, and thou shalt do prudently. Josh. i.

The *first* thing then that God requires of him, who is called to the honour of a king, is, The knowledge of his will revealed in his word.

The *second* is, An upright and willing mind, to put in execution such things as God commands in his law, without declining to the right, or to the left hand.

Kings then have not an absolute power, to do in their government what pleases them, but their power is limited by God's word; so that if they strike where God has not commanded, they are but murderers; and if they spare where God has commanded to strike, they and their throne are criminal and guilty of the wickedness which abounds upon the face of the earth, for lack of punishment.

O that kings and princes would consider what account shall be craved of them, as well for their ignorance and mis-knowledge of God's will, as for the neglecting of their office! But now, to return to the words of the prophet. In the person of the whole people he complains unto God, that the Ba-

bylonians (whom he calls, "other lords besides God," both because of their ignorance of God, and by reason of their cruelty and inhumanity,) had long ruled over them in great rigour, without pity or compassion upon the ancient men, and famous matrons; for they, being mortal enemies to the people of God, sought by all means to aggravate their yoke, yea, utterly to exterminate the memory of them, and of their religion, from the face of the earth.

After the first part of this dolorous complaint, the prophet declares the protestation of the people, saying, "Nevertheless in thee shall we remember thy name," (others read it, But we will remember thee only, and thy name;) but in the Hebrew there is no conjunction copulative in that sentence.—The mind of the prophet is plain, namely, that notwithstanding the long sustained affliction, the people of God declined not to a false and vain religion, but remembered God, who sometime appeared to them in his merciful presence; which although they saw not then, yet they would still remember his name—that is, they would call to mind the doctrine and promise, which formerly they heard, although in their prosperity they did not sufficiently glorify God, who so mercifully ruled in the midst of them. The temptation, no doubt of the Israelites was great in those days; they were carried captives from the land of Canaan, which was to them the gage and pledge of God's favour towards them: for it was the inheritance that God promised to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. The league and covenant of God's protection appeared to have been broken—they lamentably complain that they saw not their accustomed signs of God's merciful presence. The true prophets were few, and the abominations used in Babylon were exceedingly many; and so it might have appeared to them, that in vain it was that they were called the posterity of Abraham, or that ever they had received the law, or form of right religion from God. That we may the better feel it in ourselves, the temptation, I say, was even such, as if God should utterly destroy all order and policy that this day is within his church—that the true preaching of the word should be suppressed—the right use of sacraments abolished—idolatry and papistical abomination erected up again; and therewith, that our bodies should be taken prisoners by Turks, or other manifest enemies of God, and of all godliness. Such, I say, was their temptation; how notable then is this their confession that in bondage they

make, namely, That they will remember God only; although he has appeared to turn his face from them, they will remember his name, and will call to mind the deliverance promised!

Hereof have we to consider, what is our duty, if God bring us to the like extremity, as for our offences and unthankfulness justly he may. This confession is not fair flattering words of hypocrites, lying and bathing in their pleasures; but it is the mighty operation of the Spirit of God, who leaves not his own destitute of some comfort, in their most desperate calamities. This then is our duty, not only to confess our God in time of peace and quietness, but he chiefly craves, that we avow him in the midst of his and our enemies; and this is not in us to do, but it behoves that the Spirit of God work in us, above all power of nature; and thus we ought earnestly to meditate before the battle rise more vehement, which appears not to be far off. But now must we somewhat more deeply consider these judgments of God.

This people dealt with thus, as we have heard, were the only people upon the face of the earth to whom God was rightly known; among them only were his laws, statutes, ordinances, and sacrifices, used and put in practice; they only invoked his name; and to them alone had he promised his protection and assistance. What then should be the cause, that he should give them over unto this great reproach; and bring them into such extremity that his own name, in them, should be blasphemed? The prophet Ezekiel, who saw this horrible destruction, foretold by Isaiah, put into just execution, gives an answer in these words, "I gave unto them laws that were good, in the which whosoever should walk, should live in them; but they would not walk in my ways, but rebelled against me; and therefore, I have given unto them laws that are not good, and judgments, in the which they shall not live." (Ezek. xx.) The writers of the books of Kings and Chronicles declare this in more plain words, saying, "The Lord sent unto them his prophets, rising early, desiring of them to return unto the Lord, and to amend their wicked ways, for he would have spared his people, and his tabernacle; but they mocked his servants, and would not return unto the Lord their God to walk in his ways." (2 Kings xvii.) Yea, Judah itself kept not the precepts of the Lord God, but walked in the manners and ordinances of Israel; that is, of such as then had declined to idolatry from

the days of Jeroboam ; and therefore, the Lord God abhorred the whole seed of Israel, that is, the whole body of the people ; he punished them, and gave them into the hands of those that spoiled them, and so he cast them out from his presence.

Hereof it is evident, that their disobedience unto God, and unto the voice of his prophets, was the cause of their destruction. Now have we to take heed how we should use the good laws of God ; that is, his will revealed unto us in his word ; and that order of justice, which by him, for the comfort of man, is established amongst men. There is no doubt but that obedience is the most acceptable sacrifice unto God, and that which above all things he requires ; so that when he manifests himself by his word, men should follow according to their vocation and commandment. Now so it is, that God, by that great Pastor our Lord Jesus, now manifestly in his word calls us from all impiety, as well of body as of mind, to holiness of life, and to his spiritual service ; and for this purpose he has erected the throne of his mercy among us, the true preaching of his word, together with the right administration of his sacraments : but what our obedience is, let every man examine his own conscience, and consider what statutes and laws we would have to be given unto us.

Wouldst thou, O Scotland ! have a king to reign over thee in justice, equity, and mercy ? Subject thou thyself to the Lord thy God, obey his commandments, and magnify thou the word that calleth unto thee, "This is the way, walk in it;" (Isa. xxx.) and if thou wilt not, flatter not thyself ; the same justice remains this day in God to punish thee, Scotland, and thee Edinburgh especially, which before punished the land of Judah, and the city of Jerusalem. Every realm or nation, saith the prophet Jeremiah, that likewise offendeth, shall be likewise punished. (Jer. ix.) But if thou shalt see impiety placed in the seat of justice above thee, so that in the throne of God (as Solomon complains, Eccles. iii.) reigns nothing but fraud and violence, accuse thine own ingratitude and rebellion against God ; for that is the only cause why God takes away "the strong man and the man of war, the judge and the prophet, the prudent and the aged, the captain and the honourable, the counsellor and the cunning artificer ; and I will appoint, saith the Lord, children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. Children are extortioners of my people, and women have rule over them." Isa. iii.

If these calamities, I say, apprehend us, so that we see nothing but the oppression of good men, and of all godliness, and that wicked men without God reign above us; let us accuse and condemn ourselves, as the only cause of our own miseries. For if we had heard the voice of the Lord our God, and given upright obedience unto the same, God would have multiplied our peace, and would have rewarded our obedience before the eyes of the world. But now let us hear what the prophet saith further: "The dead shall not live," saith he, "neither shall the tyrants, nor the dead arise, because thou hast visited and scattered them, and destroyed all their memory." verse 14.

(To be continued.)

THE NATURE, NECESSITY, AND DESERT OF GOOD WORKS.

Good works are such actions or deeds, as are commanded in the law of God as a rule of life. An action is a good work in the view of men, when it is *materially* good; that is, when the matter of it, appears agreeable to the letter of the law, and when it is profitable, either to the individual himself who performs it, or to any other. But nothing is a good work in the sight of God, except it be *formally* as well as materially good. While the matter of it must accord to the letter, the form must, in some degree, correspond to the spirit of the holy law. No man, whilst he is under the law as a covenant of works, can do a single action that is *formally* good.—He must be a true believer, justified by faith, dead to the law as a covenant, under the law as a rule, and "created in Christ Jesus to good works;" before he can perform the smallest action, that will be good and acceptable in the sight of God. Rom. v. 6. Good works cannot be done, but in obedience to the law in the hand of the Mediator, as an authoritative rule of conduct; and cannot be performed, but by persons, who are vitally united to Him as the last Adam, and who have communion with him, in his righteousness and fulness. John xv. 5. A man, in order to perform the smallest good work, must be justified on the ground of the perfect righteousness of Christ imputed to him; and therefore, his good works arrive too late, to form any part of his justifying

righteousness. As it is impossible for a man, to be justified in the sight of God, by the works of the law *before* conversion ; so it is equally impossible for him to be justified by his good works *after* it. Good works will, indeed, justify the believer's profession of faith, before men ; but not his person before God. Such works, not being performed under the law as a covenant, and at the same time, not being perfect, cannot enter into the *ground* of his justification ; but, they manifest him to have true faith, and to be already justified by faith ; and so, they evidence his profession of faith before men to be sincere. Gal. ii. 16. Philip. iii. 9. James ii. 24. As good works are strictly enjoined in the law of God, and as it is of the highest importance to the honour of God, and also to the advancement of holiness and comfort, in believers themselves, that they understand well the *nature*, the *necessity*, and the *desert* of such works, we propose to consider briefly, each of these in order.

I. *Of the nature of good works.*—Holiness of life, or the constant practice of good works, proceeds from that holiness of heart which is imparted to elect sinners, in regeneration and sanctification ; and it consists in their conformity of life, to the law as a rule of duty. The habitual and constant performance of good works, is the same as holiness of life ; and it is the distinguishing character of every adult person, who so believes in the Lord Jesus as to have the beginnings of eternal life. Here it will be necessary, briefly to point out, What it is that constitutes an action, a *good* work in the sight of God, the omniscient and sovereign Judge of all.

Much more is requisite for this purpose, than merely a good *intention*. A man may, in his actions, propose to himself a good end, or may have an apparently good intention to serve, whilst, yet, he is ignorant of the holiness and spirituality of the Divine law. 1 Tim. i. 7. Many, with what has appeared to themselves, to be the best intention, have done, and still do, things which are *expressly* forbidden in the holy law of God. John xvi. 2. The sovereign authority of God in his law, obliges men to regulate, not only their ends of acting, but their principles, inclinations, and the matter and manner of their actions, by that Divine standard. Deut. xii. 32. Mark xii. 30, 31. The following things especially, are requisite to constitute our works of obedience, *good* works :

1. They must be such as are *required in the law* of God, and be performed in *obedience to his holy will*, expressed in the

precepts of his law. "He that keepeth the commandment, keepeth his own soul." Prov. xix. 16. "He that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever." 1 John ii. 17. The law of God is the revelation of his sovereign will, and therefore, it is the authoritative rule of our obedience. No action, then, is a good work, except it be performed agreeably to his will, and as an act of obedience to his commands.

2. They cannot be accounted good works, unless they be *raised on a good foundation*. Our works cannot be good, unless they be works of new and evangelical obedience; and this they cannot possibly be, except they are built on a new and evangelical foundation. Good works cannot stand, but on a good or an evangelical ground; namely, the doctrines, offers, invitations, and promises of the gospel, and especially, the glorious doctrine of justification, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed, and received by faith; as also the holy law, in consequence of the second Adam's fulfilling of it, divested of its federal form to believers, and in and by Him, given them, as the only and immutable rule of their new obedience. "If ye *know* these things," said our Lord to his disciples, "happy are ye if ye do them." John xiii. 17. And the apostle Paul, "These things," namely, the things mentioned in the immediately preceding context, "I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have *believed* in God, might be careful to maintain good works." Tit. iii. 8.

3. It is also requisite that they *flow from evangelical principles*. They cannot be spiritually good, nor acceptable to God, unless they proceed from good principles of action. But no principles are good unless they be evangelical. It is not sufficient for this purpose, that our performances be barely *moral*, as many of the actions of Heathens were; they must be evangelical and holy likewise. They must flow from such evangelical principles as these:—A soul regenerated by the quickening spirit of Christ; a mind enlightened with the saving knowledge of Christ, and of the truth as it is in Him; union with Christ, and with God in him, by a living faith; communion with Christ in his righteousness and fulness, and with God in him; a conscience sprinkled with his justifying, and peace-speaking blood; and a heart sanctified and comforted by his Holy Spirit. Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27. Matth. xii. 35. They must proceed more immediately, from principles and habits of faith, hope, and love, in a sanctified soul. "Without *faith*, it is impossible to please

God." Heb. xi. 6. "Every man that hath this *hope* in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John iii. 3. "This is the *love* of God, that we keep his commandments." 1 John v. 3.

4. We must be excited to the performance of them, by *evangelical motives only*. To render our works spiritually good, it is not enough that they proceed from good principles; they must, moreover, be influenced by good motives, deeply affecting and determining our hearts; such as these: The astonishing love and grace of God, manifested in his gospel; 1 John iv. 19. the sovereign authority, and will of God, as our covenant-God and Father, declared in his law as the rule of our duty; 1 Thess. iv. 3. our deliverance from condemnation, and the ample security from eternal death, which the blood of Christ affords us; 1 Cor. vi. 20. the promise and the hope of "eternal life, as the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord;" Tit. 1, 2. Rom. vi. 23. and the perfect pattern of good works, which Christ has proposed for our imitation." 1 Pet. ii. 21.

5. Another requisite is, that they be *performed in a special manner*. It is necessary that the manner, as well as the matter, of our works, be spiritually good and acceptable to God. The manner of performing them must be evangelical, suited to the state, the privileges, and the prospects of believers.—They cannot be good works, except they be performed inwardly, as well as outwardly; for "the law is spiritual," and it requires the obedience of the whole heart, as well as of the whole life. They must, in order to their being good works, be performed, in the exercise of trusting with firm confidence, that Christ will, every moment, afford us grace, to enable us to perform them acceptably; 1 Tim. i. 5. Philip. iv. 13. in the exercise of a lively hope; 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. in the exercise of supreme love to Christ, and to God in him; 1 Tim. i. 5. Rom. xiii. 10. in the exercise of adoring gratitude to the Lord, for all his benefits bestowed and promised; Psal. cxvi. 12—14. and in the exercise also, of evangelical contrition and humiliation; counting ourselves utterly "unworthy of the least of all his mercies," Gen. xxxii. 10. and indebted wholly to his sovereign grace, for all our salvation. Eph. ii. 8—10. They are good works, only in proportion as they are performed, in the *exercise* of spiritual graces, and in the *strength* of promised grace.

6. Once more; It is no less requisite, that we *propose to ourselves good ends* in performing them. The ends, which we

propose to ourselves in the practice of them, must be evangelical, as well as our principles, motives, and manner. They cannot be accounted *good* works, except our chief or ultimate end in doing them, be the glory of God in Christ, as our God. 1 Cor. x. 31. Nor is it sufficient for this purpose that in them, we *virtually* and habitually intend the glory of God; it will be necessary that, in performing *each* of them, we *actually* aim at the glory of his holy name, as our highest end. It is also requisite, that in our practice of them, we have it ever in view, in subordination to the manifested glory of God, to advance in conformity of heart and of life, to our great Redeemer; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. to embrace every opportunity of doing good to all around us; Matth. v 16. and to prepare for the full and everlasting enjoyment of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as our infinite portion. Psal. lxxiii. 25, 26.

Now the performances of real Christians have, in a higher or lower degree, *all* these requisites; and therefore they are strictly speaking, *good* works. The depravity that remains in the hearts of believers, hinders, indeed, their works from being *perfectly* good; but it cannot prevent them from being truly or spiritually good, and "acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." The good Spirit of God, dwells in all the saints, and "works in them, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." Philip. ii. 13. He has begun, and he promotes, a good work of grace in their hearts; and from this, proceed all good works of obedience in their lives. Philip. i 6. But, seeing their best actions are not yet perfectly good, they ought so to increase and "abound in every good work," as constantly to press on toward perfection in holiness. They are commanded to increase more and more, in the strength and liveliness of their spiritual graces, and in the zealous and diligent performance of their necessary duties. 2 Pet. iii 18. 1 Thess. iv. 1.

(To be Continued.)

SYNODICAL SERMONS.

(Continued from p. 93.)

Mr. McIndoe takes for his text, Eph. i. 22, "*The Father of glory gave him to be Head over all to the Church.*"

In his introduction he makes some very just and appropriate remarks respecting the "indifference to the regal claims of Emmanuel," which

is so commonly met with, among professors of religion ; and of which he says, " It is a pernicious delusion in the minds of many serious persons, that they have nothing higher to mind than their own spiritual welfare. Surely this is not the supreme and ultimate object for which they have been created, redeemed and regenerated. Important as is the religious improvement of their souls, and exalted as are the spiritual pleasures to which they are destined in the heavenly state, there is a still higher object, of which they should never lose sight, and to which it ill becomes them to betray the least indifference ; that is, the honor of their Redeemer."

The writer gives the following as his plan of illustration. " The truths to which I shall allude, are the three following : —I. That Jesus Christ is Head over all the nations of the earth, to the church. II. That He is Head over all civil rulers, to the church. III. That He is Head over all the resources of private benevolence to, the church.

The design of the writer may be partly understood by the following passage from the illustration of the second head. " Let us explain and demonstrate the fact that he is Head over all civil rulers. You will observe, it is not asserted, that the institution of civil government has originated in grace. This opinion holds no part in the creed of the church to which we belong. Though occasionally imputed to her, sometimes in quarters from which we might have expected strict justice and historical accuracy, it has ever been disclaimed, and pointedly condemned. The opinion which she does entertain on this subject, and which she has stated with sufficient precision, in her subordinate standards, is that magistracy is the ordinance of God, as the moral Governor of the universe, and is founded on moral principles, and relations which existed previous to the developement of the mediatorial economy. At the same time, looking into the scriptures with an honest desire to know what they teach, we cannot help seeing, that this ordinance has been put under the actual control of the exalted Mediator. Assign it whatever origin you please ; divide it into whatever branches you may deem best for the public good ; invite to its administration as many orders of officers as there are grades in the commonwealth ; and call them by whatever titles the pride of monarchical grandeur, or the love of republican simplicity may suggest, we will still maintain they are all transferred from the government of God as an absolute Deity to that of his Son as the Mediatorial Governor. Nor shall we cease to demand even of the highest potentates, to whose countries Providence has conveyed the revelation of mercy, that they shall, in their official character, with their crowns on their heads, and their sceptres in their hands, fall down before his throne, and yield obedience to his will."

Having proved, by abundance of scripture citation, the truth of the position contained in the above paragraph, the writer proceeds with his illustration. " It is very true, many rulers even of those countries which have derived the greatest benefit from divine revelation, are very prone to forget that they are under the supremacy of Jesus Christ.—

Even the general idea of Providence as concerned in their elevation to the offices they occupy, and as controlling the affairs over which they preside, they are not careful habitually to remember and duly to appreciate. Owing to the feeble influence of religious sentiment upon their minds, amid the many unfriendly influences against which they have to contend, they are often in danger of overlooking altogether that superintending power, whose Spirit alone can endow them with the requisite qualifications, and whose blessing only can crown their efforts with abundant success. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that they should be more ready to overlook the peculiar sovereignty of the Redeemer over them—a fact to which their attention may not have been particularly called in the course of their early education, which may never have been urged on their consideration by the ministers of religion they have been accustomed to hear, and of which they may never have been led by circumstances to estimate the supreme importance. How much to be regretted, by every pious mind, and by every christian patriot, is the indifference shown to this fact even in our own favored land ! Tell the monarch of these realms, that he is placed under the immediate sway of our Redeemer, and owes unreserved obedience to his will in his official actings as well as in his religious duties, these would probably be strange sounds to the royal ears. Tell the ministers of the crown, that they have a Master in heaven who is far higher than the earthly master whom they serve, who has prescribed laws for the regulation of their official conduct, and to whom they are accountable for all the measures they adopt in any branch of the public business ; these perhaps, would be new views to most of them. Tell the members of the legislature that they are nothing more than the deputies of the ‘blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,’ that his will is the fountain of all righteous legislation—his law the infallible criterion of all political measures—his church the central object, around which all secular interests should revolve—and his honor the ultimate end to which all their proposals, deliberations, and decisions should be directed ; and while some would hail these sentiments with equal reverence, gratitude and pleasure ; others it is feared, would turn away from them with expressions of utter derision and bursts of profane laughter. These things are deeply to be lamented. Yet let us rejoice, that whatever be the inattention, the ingratitude, or the enmity of rulers in any land, to the reigning Mediator, they cannot divest Him of the authority which he hath received from the Father, nor frustrate those designs which he wishes to accomplish by their instrumentality.”

We give one other quotation. It is the opening paragraph of the application to the sermon. “Such, Fathers and Brethren, are a few thoughts on *principles*, the consideration of which has appeared to me not improper on this important occasion. In relation to these principles, the position which *this* church occupies, under her glorious Head, is one of great moment and of great responsibility. Hitherto she has been enabled to maintain them, with some degree of exemplary consistency and intelligent zeal. Neither calumnious reproaches on the

one hand, nor insidious flatteries on the other, have succeeded in causing her to swerve from their faithful profession. I trust her future course will not be unworthy of her past conduct. Now that many are approaching the sacred ground on which she has stood from her commencement, and are advocating with ability and zeal, peculiar principles* for which she has contended with unflinching firmness. I trust she will be strengthened to retain a firm grasp of the standard of the Covenanted reformation, till she sees it planted on the ramparts of Mount Zion amid joyful voices, and the bright banner of the cross waving over the nations subjected to the reigning Redeemer. Meanwhile, the moral dangers to which she is exposed, during the war of opinions that has begun to rage in many quarters of our land, call for no ordinary degree of christian discrimination, fidelity, and vigilance."

A POPISH MIRACLE.

In the Life of Mary Queen of Scots, by Henry Glassford Bell, Esq., we find the following account of a pretended miracle upon a blind boy. The author was certainly not induced to give this account from any partiality to the Scottish Reformers, of whom he speaks in no friendly terms. The miracle is in good keeping with many related in the Roman Breviary, and is a fulfilment of the prophecy of Paul concerning "lying wonders." 2 Thess. ii. 9.

There was a chapel in the neighborhood of Musselburgh, dedicated to the Lady of Loretto, which, from the character of superior sanctity it had acquired, had long been the favourite resort of religious devotees. In this chapel a body of the Catholic priests undertook to put their religion to the test by performing a miracle. They fixed upon a young man who was well known as a common beggar, in the streets of Edinburgh, and engaged to restore to him, in the presence of the assembled people, the perfect use of his eyesight. A day was named, on which they calculated they might depend on this wonderful interposition of Divine power in their behalf. From motives of curiosity, a great crowd was attracted at the appointed time to the chapel. The blind man made his appearance on a scaffold erected for the occasion. The priests approached the altar, and after praying very devoutly, and performing other religious ceremonies, he who had previously been stone blind opened his eyes and declared he saw all things plainly. Having hum-

* In this place, Mr. McIndoe refers to the views which have been brought out very prominently in the controversy which now rages and has done, for several years on the question of national church establishments. In advocating church establishments, the friends of the church of Scotland and others, have taken the ground of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, relative to the magistrate's power "*circa sacra*"—the supremacy of the Mediator over the nations—and the application of the Scriptures to all things civil as well as religious.

bly and gratefully thanked his benefactors, the priests, he was permitted to mingle among the astonished people, and received their charity.

Unfortunately, however, for the success of this deception, a gentleman from Fife, of the name of Colville, determined to penetrate, if possible, a little further into the mystery. He prevailed upon the subject of the recent experiment to accompany him to his lodgings in Edinburgh. As soon as they were alone, he locked the chamber-door, and contrived to win from him the whole secret. It turned out, that in his boyhood this tool in the hands of the designing had been employed as a herd by the nuns of the convent of Sciennes, then in the neighborhood of Edinburgh. It was remarked by the sisterhood that he had an extraordinary facility in "flipping up the lid of his eyes, and casting up the white." Some of the neighboring priests, hearing accidentally of this talent, imagined that it might be applied to good account. They accordingly took him from Sciennes to the monastery near Musselburgh, where they kept him till he had made himself an adept in this mode of counterfeiting blindness, and till his personal appearance was so much changed that the few who had been acquainted with him before, would not be able to recognize him. They then sent him into Edinburgh to beg publicly and make himself familiarly known to the inhabitants as a common blind mendicant. So far every thing had gone smoothly, and the scene at the chapel of Loretto might have had effect on the minds of the vulgar, had Colville's activity not discovered the gross imposture. Colville who belonged to the Congregation, instantly took the most effectual means to make known the deceit. He insisted upon the blind man's appearing with him next day at the Cross of Edinburgh, where the latter repeated all he had previously told Colville, and confessed the iniquity of his own conduct as well as that of the priests. To shelter him from their revenge Colville immediately afterward carried him off to Fife; and the story with all its details, being speedily disseminated, exposed the Catholic clergy to more contempt than ever.—*Life of Mary Queen of Scots*, vol. 1, pp. 51—52.

ITEMS OF INTELLIGENCE.

Slavery in Cuba.—From a gentleman long residing in Cuba, we have recently obtained the following statements.

The population of Cuba is now about one million. Forty estates belonged to resident Americans, and were lately purchased. Some of the Spaniards think our countrymen are emigrating to Cuba with a view of taking ultimate possession, as in Texas.

Up to 1835, Bozal negroes—that is, Africans recently imported, to the number of fifteen thousand, were delivered over to the Spanish authorities, to be instructed in some trade, agreeably to the arrangement between the Spanish and British governments; but most of them were publicly sold in the market, the same as other slaves—that is, their ser-

slaves were sold for five to ten years ; some of them being sent to the mines, and some to the other side of the island. Very few of them will ever probably recover their liberty. It is the practice, when a slave dies, to put one of the Bozals in his place, and thus his identity is lost. Since 1835, the Mixed Court turn the Bozals over to the British islands. In that year considerable numbers of slaves were shipped from Cuba to Texas. There is not a slave on the island legally educated.

The mortality of slaves in Cuba is very great,—owing chiefly to their being excessively overworked. In the towns the yearly mortality is about 3 per cent ; on the breeding farms, 5 ; on the coffee plantations, 6 to 7 ; and on the sugar plantations, 10 to 15 per cent ! In 15 years the slave population would be swept away, except for the foreign slave trade. The slaves on sugar plantations, from Dec. to May, have only 4 hours for sleep. On the coffee plantations they work moonlight nights. The proportion of sexes on the sugar plantations is 30 females to 70 males. The proportion of females is larger on coffee plantations. Of the Africans imported contrary to the treaties and to law, the proportion of females is from 30 to 35 per cent. Slaves are badly fed in Cuba. They have no ground to cultivate for themselves.—They are shut up at night promiscuously in large enclosures called Baracoons, having no roofs. Much of the whipping is for scaling the walls.

General Tacon was Governor General for four years. He took away 23,000 doubloons, perquisites of office! He received ten dollars a head on all persons brought into the Havana District from Africa.—And yet the importations are contrary to law. For nearly a year no cargo of negroes has been brought to Cuba under the Spanish flag—but they are brought under the flags of Portugal and the UNITED STATES.

Dr. Channing's publications on Slavery have found their way to Cuba, and their contents are privately circulated in Spanish manuscripts. Many of the young professional men are abolitionists, and the literature of the island is becoming more favorable to the doctrine of human rights. A small volume of literary articles, by a man who was a slave in Cuba, has been printed in London.—*Jour. Com.*

The Mormons.—It appears, by recent accounts, that the Mormons are making converts in Illinois ; and that they have purchased twenty thousand acres of land, and laid out a city, which they call *Nauvoo*.—They have also commenced the publication of a paper, called “ *The Times and Seasons*.” A Mr. John Correll, recently a member of the Legislature of Missouri, has published a book, giving an account of his conversion to Mormonism, and *his reasons for leaving them*. It is singular that this imposture, after having so many times been detected and exposed, should still gain proselytes. It shows, however, what an exuberant soil the human mind is, in its depraved state, for the growth of error and delusion. Nothing can be too absurd, if connect-

ed with enthusiasm and apparent piety, to be received by the mind that is a stranger to the truth as it is in Jesus. Mormonism, however, is rendered much more specious and dangerous, from having retained a portion of truth. This, mixed with the idea of Divine impulses and new revelations, together with some extravagant notions about coming events, is sufficient to carry them to any extreme of enthusiasm. And it is probably the effects of enthusiastic excitement, rather than the conviction of the understanding, that leads so many to embrace it.—Christians should be established with grace, and not be running after every “Lo here!” and “Lo there!” and if they give way to the propensity to hear and learn every new thing that comes along, it is not at all surprising, that the Lord should leave them to fall into grievous error, and continue in it, till they are sufficiently humbled to be satisfied with the ‘sincere milk of the word.’

Masses for the Dead.—Some months ago, a case of much interest was decided in a court in the State of Maine. A deluded Roman Catholic died some years ago, leaving the interest of a large sum of money to be paid annually to the “holy and disinterested priest,” for saying secret masses for his deliverance out of the fires of purgatory.

The imposture of the priest went on successfully for several years. But, this intolerable burthen on the family, being looked into by the executor, and their friends, in consequence of the loss of property, and the difficulty thence arising of paying the priest for his long course of twenty years’ experiments on the quenching of fires, by means of masses only,—without any water!! The executor told the priest that he would henceforth pay him no more money, until he could prove that the masses had all been actually, and *bona fide*, said and sung; and moreover, that said masses were doing, in truth and honesty, what they were intended to do! Being, it seems, *secret masses*, and the priest failing utterly in his proof either that he had said them, or that they had done any good whatever to the poor burned and branded soul,—the jury, like honest men, gave a verdict against the priest and all his foolery, and in favor of the oppressed and plundered family.

The Slave Trade.—Lord John Russell lately announced in the House of Commons, that the British Government have it in contemplation to send steam vessels up the great river Niger and Quorra, with a view to promote a mutually beneficial commerce with the natives, and thus to wean them from the horrid practice of trading in human flesh. This measure is recommended by Mr. Fowell Buxton in his recent valuable work on the slave trade; and it might eminently tend to promote the civilization of the interior of Africa, as well as to put down the man-thief.

The General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church is to meet at Alleghenytown, on the 16th inst. at 7 o’clock P. M.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

JULY, 1840.

No. V.

CHRONOLOGICAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE COVENANTED CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND.

In preceding articles we have laid before our readers some interesting reminiscences of the Scottish reformation from Popery. We have followed it, in its onward progress, till we have seen Popery abjured and a national sanction given to Protestantism; the nation pledged, in holy covenant, to maintain this system of reformation; and the Presbyterian form of church government reared on the basis of Divine institution, and recognised by the laws of the land as the government of the church of Scotland. The reformation from Popery, or, as it is sometimes called, the First Reformation, was thus completed; and a system scriptural both in doctrine and government, was made the established religion of Scotland.

The men who, under God, conducted and brought to a successful termination this admirable system of reformation are entitled to the most grateful remembrance of their posterity and of the world. We propose in this paper to give a brief sketch of some of the leading and prominent reformers. It has been already stated that the First Book of Discipline was prepared by Knox and five other ministers who were associated with him in that work. These were John Winram, John Spottiswood, John Willock, John Douglass, and John Row, all of whom were eminently useful in establishing the reformation. But to the extraordinary labors of John Knox and Andrew Melville was the Protestant cause most indebted for its success; the former was the principal means in

breaking down the system of Popery in Scotland, the latter of giving to the covenanted church her well digested form of Presbyterian order contained in the Second Book of Discipline. The Earl of Moray, and the learned George Buchanan, too, are entitled to a distinguished place among those who exerted a powerful influence in the cause of reformation: the former by his wise counsels and intrepid and fearless action as chief magistrate, while he held the office of Regent of Scotland; the latter by the judicious and dexterous use which he made of his profound scholarship and political sagacity.

On the 24th November, 1572, died John Knox. On the 9th of the same month he had preached and presided in the installation of Mr. Lawson as his colleague and successor. Two days afterwards he was seized by the illness which terminated his life. In the last sickness and death of this reformer there was a striking exemplification of the power of the gospel. While reading the account of the last days of Knox, by his biographer, we are reminded of the truth of Scripture—"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

During the life of this great reformer, he was hated and slandered by the minions of the Popish apostacy. Since his death the most illiberal of the English hierarchy have united with the abettors of Rome in abusing his character and striving to dishonor his memory! In this disgusting employment they have been cheered by infidels and Tories; the high ideas entertained by Knox on the subject of human rights has especially exposed him to the envenomed darts of the latter. Notwithstanding these pitiful attempts to rob him of his fair fame, the character and memory of the reformer towers high above their reach.

Dr. Cook, whose illiberal notions of both ecclesiastical and civil liberty remove from his opinions all hazard of partiality towards Knox, says*—"In the arduous contest for truth, Knox bore a most conspicuous part. The nobles who defended the principles of the reformation were often guided by interested motives; and although it cannot be admitted that they were indifferent about religion, it is certain that their zeal for its purity sometimes yielded to the fascinating love of affluence or of honor. But Knox never for a moment deserted what he believed to be his duty. In the most try-

* History of the Reformation in Scotland.

ing seasons he remained inflexible, and although susceptible of the ardour of friendship, and connected by the strongest ties with the eminent and powerful men with whom he had long acted, he did not hesitate to stand alone, to forfeit their kindness and their esteem, when he could not preserve these without a compromise endangering the liberty or religion of his country." * * * * "Amidst all his eagerness, amidst the severity of remonstrance or reproach, his eye was invariably fixed upon the improvement of his fellow creatures, while with one hand he planted the banners of religious reformation, with the other he broke the fetters with which despotism would have chained and degraded his countrymen."

The political and religious sentiments of the elegant and profound historian of England, Hume, have led him uniformly to speak of this distinguished reformer with asperity or contempt: and writers infinitely inferior have adopted the unfounded aspersions which he sanctioned. But let not literary fame succeed in hiding what ought not to be concealed, and what ought forever to be recollected with gratitude: that, to what has been branded as the sedition of Knox, we owe the first improvement of the science of government; that to what has been condemned as his fanaticism, we are indebted for that emancipation from spiritual oppression, from which so much that is good has happily resulted.

The intellectual endowments of Knox were of the very highest order; and he "united the love of study with a disposition to active employment—two qualities which are seldom found in the same person. The truths which he discovered he felt an irresistible impulse to impart unto others, for which he was qualified by a bold and fervid eloquence, singularly adapted to arrest the attention and govern the minds of a fierce and unpolished people.

From the time that he embraced the reformed doctrines, the desire of propagating them, and of delivering his countrymen from the delusions and corruptions of popery, became his ruling passion, to which he was always ready to sacrifice his ease, his interest, his reputation and his life.—An ardent attachment to civil liberty held the next place in his breast to love of the reformed religion. That the zeal with which he labored to advance these was of the most disinterested kind, no candid person who has paid attention to his life can doubt for a moment, whatever opinion he may

entertain of some of the means which he employed for that purpose. 'In fact he thought only of advancing the glory of God, and promoting the welfare of his country.' Intrepidity, a mind elevated above sordid views, indefatigable activity, and constancy which no disappointments could shake eminently qualified him for the hazardous and difficult post which he occupied. His integrity was above the suspicion of corruption, his firmness was proof against the solicitations of friends and the threats of enemies. Though his impetuosity and courage led him frequently to expose himself to danger, we never find him neglecting to take prudent cautions for his safety.

His ministerial functions were discharged with the greatest assiduity, fidelity, and fervour. No avocation or infirmity prevented him from appearing in the pulpit. Preaching was an employment in which he delighted, and for which he was qualified, by an extensive acquaintance with the Scriptures, and the happy art of applying them, in the most striking manner, to the existing circumstances of the church, and of his hearers. His powers of alarming the conscience and arousing the passions, have been frequently mentioned; but he excelled also in opening up the consolations of the gospel, and calming the breasts of those who were agitated with a sense of their sins. When he discoursed of the griefs and joys, the conflicts and triumphs of genuine christians, he declared what he himself had known and felt.

In contemplating such a character as that of Knox, it is not *the man*, so much as *the reformer*, that ought to engage our attention. To those persons who complain, that they are disappointed at not finding, in our great reformer, a mild demeanour, courteous manners, and a winning address, we may say in the language of our Lord to the Jews concerning the Baptist: "what went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? What went ye out to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appavelled, and live delicately, are in the king's courts. But what went ye out to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you and more than a prophet." Those talents which fit a person for acting with propriety and usefulness in one age and situation, would altogether unfit him for another.— Before the reformation, superstition, shielded by ignorance and armed with power, governed with gigantic sway. Men of mild spirits and gentle manners, would have been as unfit

for taking the field against this enemy, as a dwarf or a child for encountering a giant.

There are few who have attended to the active and laborious exertions of Knox, who have not been led insensibly to form the opinion that he was of a robust constitution. This is however a mistake. He was of small stature, and of a weakly habit of body ; a circumstance which serves to give a higher idea of the vigor of his mind.*

As a friend and supporter of the Scottish reformation, none rank so high as the Earl of Moray. He was an illegitimate son of James the V. Mary being under the necessity of resigning the government, and her son, James the VI. yet a minor, the Earl of Moray was elected regent of the kingdom. In this high office he had an opportunity of more successfully furthering the work of reformation than in private life ; though the weight of his talents and influence had all along been employed in this good work. "It was the happiness of the regent, (says the Biographer of Knox,) that in his early years, he fell into the company of men, who cultivated his vigorous understanding, gave a proper direction to his activity, and instilled into his mind the principles of religion and virtue. His early adoption of the reformed sentiments, the steadiness with which he adhered to them, the uniform correctness of his morals, his integrity, sagacity, and enterprising but cool courage soon placed him in the first rank among those who embarked in the struggle for the reformation of religion, and maintenance of national liberties, and secured to him their cordial and unbounded confidence. The honors which Queen Mary conferred on him were not too great for the services which he rendered to her ; and had she continued to trust him with the direction of her counsels, those measures would have been avoided which precipitated her ruin. He was repeatedly placed in a situation which would have tempted the ambition of others, less qualified, to aspire to the supreme authority ; yet he showed no disposition to grasp at this. When he accepted the regency, it was in compliance with the decided and uncorrupted voice of the acting majority in the nation, pointing him out as the fittest person for occupying that high station. His conduct, in one of the most delicate and embarrassing situations in which a governor was ever placed, shewed that his countrymen were not

* McCrie's Life of Knox.

mistaken in their choice. He united, in no ordinary degree, those qualities which are rarely combined in the same individual, and which make up the character of an accomplished prince. Excelling equally in the arts of war and peace, he reduced the country to universal obedience to the king's authority by his military skill and valour, and preserved it in a state of tranquility and order by the wise and impartial administration of justice. Successful in all his warlike enterprises, he never once tarnished the laurels of victory by cruelty or unnecessary rigour to the vanquished. He knew how to maintain the authority of the laws, and bridle the licentious, by salutary severity, and at the same time to temper the rigour of justice by the interposition of mercy.

This good man and exemplary ruler was basely assassinated in the year 1570, by an ungrateful wretch, of the name of Hamilton, whom he had pardoned, having been tried and condemned for the crime of rebellion. "The death of the regent was severely felt by the whole community; but especially by the common people, who loved him when alive, and wept over him when dead, as a public parent; because, beyond all his other brilliant actions, they remembered that the country, from being every where in a state of disorder and confusion, had, within a year, been so completely quieted, that a person was not more safe at home than upon a journey, or at an inn; and now laying aside envy, they who were unjust to him when alive, followed him with merited encomiums to his grave."* He was long and affectionately remembered among the Commons, says Robertson, "by the name of the *Good Regent*."

George Buchanan died 28th September, 1582, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. At an early age he became acquainted with the sentiments of the reformers. The pen of this enlightened scholar and elegant poet was soon employed in exposing the abominations of the popish system, which at that time held his country in vassalage.—The first of his productions of this kind was a satirical poem, entitled "the dream," in which he exposes the absurdity of a monastic life, and the hypocrisy of the monks, particularly those of the order of St. Francis. In consequence of this he incurred the displeasure of the fraternity, and was exposed to considerable danger. The patronage of James the V. who

* Aikman's history of Scotland.

had committed the education of his son to Buchanan, protected him from direct attack. In obedience to the command of James, he wrote another satire, in which, "in a strain of the most eloquent invective he lashed without reserve their vileness and impurities. This he published under the title of the Franciscan. But what the friars dared to perpetrate, it was death to expose. The horrible system, which under the name of religion, found access to the chambers, and violated all the sanctities of connubial enjoyment, trembled at the light of reason and of Scripture; and when the torch of genius blazened the foul deeds of the vilest tyranny that ever enthralled the souls and the bodies of men, the wretches naturally sought refuge from its excruciating lustre, by attempting to extinguish the sacred fire that tormented them." But the king was too sensual to be sincerely attached to the principles of the reformation, and too avaricious to resist the bribes offered him by the popish priesthood; and was therefore readily inclined to concur in a prosecution raised against Buchanan. Thus he basely betrayed the reformer into the hands of his inveterate enemies, the monks. Buchanan was arrested and cast into prison, from which he made his escape. Having spent some time in England, he went to France whither he was pursued by the enmity of Cardinal Beaton, and his life exposed to eminent hazard.

During his residence abroad, Buchanan held the professorship of latin in the college of Bourdeaux, in France, and also in the new university of Coimbra, in Portugal. Invited to this last place by his old friend, Govean, the principal of the university, Buchanan cheerfully accepted the invitation, as the affairs of Europe threatened a crisis, and Portugal seemed the only corner which promised repose. In this, however, he was disappointed. "The fame of Buchanan's superior genius (says his biographer) attracted a superior degree of enmity from the partizans of a church whose stability depends on the ignorance of her adherents; besides he was a stranger and friendless." Add to this, the fact, that his having written a poem against the Franciscans, was discovered. Buchanan was cast into the dungeons of the inquisition. There "after the inquisitors had tormented and worn out both Buchanan and themselves for nearly a year and a half, in order to justify their proceedings against a scholar of such celebrity, they sentenced him to be confined to a mon-

astery for some months. To this we owe that excellent paraphrase of the Psalms of David, which placed him first among modern latin poets,—here it was composed ! Leaving Portugal, he spent several years in Italy and France.—“A great part of this time (Buchanan himself remarks in his autobiography) he devoted to the study of the Holy Scriptures, that he might be able to judge correctly respecting those controversies which occupied a greater part of the world.”

Having returned to his own country, he was selected by Queen Mary after her accession to the throne, to assist her in her classical studies. Notwithstanding this, however, Buchanan's steady attachment to the reformed religion, and the liberties of his country, placed him in direct opposition to the two ruling passions of Mary, which were love of despotism in the state, and zeal for popery in the church. In the year 1564, he prepared for the press a collection of satires, in which he employed his keenest irony, and most vehement indignation against the fooleries and impurities of the popish church. In 1566, he was appointed principal of St. Leonard's college. As principal, Buchanan delivered lectures on theology. He had repeatedly the honor of a seat in the General Assembly as a Doctor of Divinity ; and in 1567, he was chosen moderator of the Assembly.

During the administration of the Regents Moray and Morton, Buchanan held some of the highest and most important civil offices ; and latterly he was entrusted by the Privy Council with the important charge of the education of the young king.

The last of all Buchanan's works, was his history of Scotland—a work which was exposed to the vengeance of all who were attached to popery, or who advocated the divine right of kings. To vindicate the course adopted by the Protestant lords in regard to their treatment of Queen Mary, Buchanan wrote his celebrated treatise “*De jure Regni.*” “At the time of its publication it had to combat with the accumulated prejudices and interests of ages of ignorance and superstition ; and every argument, which the hireling of established abuses, or the arms of hereditary power could call forth, was exerted to circumscribe, but as usual, contributed to extend its circulation. It was read with unparalleled avidity on the continent, and had obtained too deep a root in the public mind of Europe to be eradicated by the ungrateful and imbecile attempts of the monarch to whom it was

dedicated, to suppress it. And now when the prejudices of the day are over, the verdict of some of the ablest writers of our own time has assigned it a primary station among the few books in political science which deserve to be preserved. "The first man of that period," says Sir James Mackintosh, "who united elegant learning to original and masculine thought, was Buchanan ; and he, too, seems to have been the first scholar who caught from the ancients the noble flames of republican enthusiasm. This praise is merited by his neglected, though incomparable tract, *De jure Regni*, in which the principles of popular politics, and the maxims of a free government, are delivered with a precision, and enforced with an energy, which no former age had equalled, and no succeeding has surpassed."

Mr. Aikman sums up the character of Buchanan, thus,—
"His integrity was unbending, and his veracity unimpeachable. He was a patriot in the purest sense of the word. Perceiving early in life the necessity, he shared in the dangers of the reformation, and having carefully examined, he ardently embraced the doctrines of the reformation. His piety seems to have been sincere and solid ; it accompanied him through life, and supported him in death."

After Knox, Andrew Melville deserves the most distinguished place among the Scottish reformers. He died an exile in a foreign country in the year 1622, in the 80th year of his age.

The establishment of the church of Scotland on the basis of presbyterianism, was much indebted to the sagacity and untiring efforts of Melville. But James the VI. hating Presbyterianism in his heart, because it stood in the way of his tyrannical designs, soon manifested a disposition to overturn this part of the reformation, by the introduction of prelacy. His accession to the English throne in 1603, gave him an opportunity of successfully attacking the liberties of the church of Scotland, of which, with all the meanness of a recreant and perfidious traitor, he took advantage. Melville stood eminently in the way of James' designs. It was necessary, therefore, that this obstacle should be removed. Accordingly by an arbitrary exercise of power, Melville had been confined in the year 1602, within the precincts of the college of St. Andrews, of which he was at the time principal. In 1606, under pretext of consulting with Melville and other leading ministers, on "such things as would tend to settle the

peace of the church," they were commanded by James to go to London. With this they complied. But Melville was not suffered to return. He was finally confined in the tower of London, where he remained a prisoner for four years. And "the injustice of Melville's imprisonment was heightened by the unnecessary severity with which he was treated in the tower. No person was allowed to see him, but the person who brought him his food. The use of paper, pen and ink was strictly prohibited him. But tyrants, though they can fetter and torment the body, have no power over the free and heaven-born soul. Melville's spirit remained unconfined and unbroken in his narrow and uncomfortable cell.—When his apartments were examined, its walls were found covered with verses, which he had engraved in fair and beautiful characters, with the tongue of his shoe-buckle." He endured this rigorous confinement for about ten months: during the remaining time he was in the tower he was allowed the use of writing materials; and latterly to see his friends. In 1611, through the influence of the Duke of Bouillon, a French nobleman, Melville obtained liberty to withdraw to France. He obtained a theological professorship in the protestant university of Sedan. Here he continued till his death in 1622. Boyd, of Trochrig, at that time principal of the university of Edinburgh, notices the death of Melville, in the following language.—"He was rejected of his native country, by the malice of the times and men, because he had, with fortitude and firmness, maintained the truth, and given testimony to it before the princes of this world."

Melville possessed great intrepidity, invincible fortitude, and unextinguishable ardour of mind. His spirit was independent, high, fiery, and incapable of being tamed by threats or violence; but he was at the same time open, candid, generous, affectionate, faithful. The whole tenor of his life shows that his mind was deeply impressed with a sense of religion; and that he felt passionately attached to civil liberty. The spirit of his piety was strikingly contrasted with that compound of indifference and selfishness which is so often lauded under the names of moderation and charity. His intellectual endowments were confessedly superior: possessing a vigorous genius and an elegant taste, he excelled all his countrymen of that age in the acquirements of a various and profound erudition.

Melville was the first to discover and denounce the scheme which James the VI. had planned for the overthrow of the

religious and civil liberty of Scotland ; and he persisted in opposing its execution at the expense of deprivation of office, imprisonment, and perpetual proscription from his native country. No sufferings to which he was subjected could bring him to retract the opposition which he made to it. No offers which he received could induce him to give it the slightest mark of his approbation. By the manner in which he bore his exile he testified against it. And by animating his brethren who remained at home, he contributed materially to bring about a revolution, which not long after his death, levelled with the ground that ill-omened fabric, the rearing of which had cost the labor of so many years, and the expense of so much principle and conscience. With the exception of Knox, there is no individual, from whom Scotland has received such important services, or to whom she continues to owe so deep a debt of national respect and gratitude, as Andrew Melville.*

ON PSALMODY.

(Continued from p. 109.)

4. There are serious objections to the use of human compositions in the ordinance of praise, which we see no possibility of completely removing.

Praise consists in ascribing unto God the glory of what he is, and of what he hath done. When in doing this, we make use of the words which he himself hath given us, we have every confidence that we ascribe unto him nothing but what is right, and will be accepted of him if presented in a right manner. But, if we ascribe unto God, that which he is not, or any work that he hath not done, it is not to praise, but to dishonor him. And how shall weak, fallible man, in addressing God in the words and conceptions of a blind and sinful worm like himself, be assured that he is not dishonoring him, and that he, instead of offering an acceptable sacrifice, is offering strange fire unto the Lord ?

Besides this, can there be any doubt, that an inspired song of praise is better than any human composition can possibly be ; and if it is, ought we not to serve God with the best we

* McCrie's life of Melville.

possess ? How shall we be excused in offering the torn, the blind, the maimed, and polluted, on God's altar, when he has furnished us with a sacrifice without blemish and without spot ? Have we not reason to dread the displeasure of Jehovah, expressed in these terrible words, Mal. i. 14, "Cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing ?"

But again, on the supposition that human composition is to be admitted as the matter of our praise, whose composition is it that is thus to be exalted ? I have not the faculty of composing any thing like a hymn myself, and ninety-nine out of a hundred of those whose duty it is to praise God, are in the same situation ; what shall we do ? whose composition shall we adopt ? How distinguish between what is duty, and what it would be sin to use ? Here amid the multitude of counsellors, we must be greatly perplexed. It is sounded in our ears from hundreds of voices, "The divine Watts is best, his lines flow with great smoothness, there is nothing in them opposite to the spirit of the gospel, nothing Jewish or cloudy to darken the sight of God our Saviour—no dreadful curse against men is there proposed to your lips." Yes, gentle friends, this is fine and may possibly be so ; but, then again, some who knew him best, affirm—indeed he himself allows, that his own views of God our Saviour were rather dark. He had great doubts about the Trinity, the Sonship of Christ, and several other things of great importance, and if so, his views of the work of God in the redemption of sinners, must have been greatly perplexed and wavering.—Now is it so, that in the words and thoughts of this man, I shall best ascribe unto God the glory of what he is, and has done ? The very thought of his doubts on these great points, would, I fear, "*flat* my devotion and touch all the springs of uneasiness within me," and "my conscience would be affrighted, lest I should speak a falsehood unto God." If not Watts, then where shall I be safe ? can any of the numerous host of Psalm and hymn makers be followed with confidence ? I fear it cannot be. Turning, however, from this confusion of contending claims, the soul finds rest in the sure word of God himself ; "this is the very truth most sure."

Another difficulty, I apprehend of some magnitude, is this, that if God has not given us an inspired Psalmody, but any man and every man may come forth with his Psalm or his collection, claiming precedence of his competitors for public

favor, the Psalmody of the church is subjected to perpetual change. And what changes have already taken place, let the yearly accumulating pile of collections, by Watts, Rippon, Dobell, Wesley, Roby, Collyer, Codman, Mecklenberg, Worcester, this church and that church, and an innumerable catalogue of others, bear witness. Taking all these together, what a chaos of contending sentiments, opposing thoughts, erroneous doctrines, empty trifles, enthusiastic ravings!—And these have all been, or were intended to be, addressed to the Most High, in the solemn exercise of praise! How strange must that character be, to whom all they contain may be ascribed! And who shall set bounds to the evil? Scarce a year, perhaps scarce a month, but brings forth its collection. What a source of perplexity to the worshipper! What a source of contention in the church! connected with this, is another evil, that the Psalmody of the church instead of being a barrier to the spread of error, which it would be, were the inspired Psalmody retained, becomes the most successful method of advancing it. Every composer of a hymn naturally introduces into it the religious sentiments which he approves. The Unitarian disseminates his blasphemies, and the Universalist, the Arminian and the Hopkinsian, their respective heresies, perhaps more successfully in this way than in any other; while they piously profess to be praising God. This is not mere theory. A decided but candid friend of Watts, (Dr. Ely,) admits, that Watts' treatise, has wrought much mischief in the christian church. And if so, has not his psalms disseminated much wider the mischief contained in them? and of this, his greatest admirers must admit that they contain not a little. And does not this fact speak loudly on this subject, that not a single denomination of professing christians has departed from the doctrines of the Reformation Churches as set forth in the Westminster standards, but has adopted human compositions as the matter of their praise?

These are difficulties and evils connected with a human Psalmody which are of serious import, and which I fear, it is impossible to remedy, without going to the root of the matter, casting these idols, the work of men's hands to the moles and to the bats, and returning to the good old way. In doing so, "ye shall find rest for your souls."

The sum of the matter then, is this, that God once gave a system of inspired songs, which were used with divine approbation in his worship—that there is no evidence whatev-

er that he has set them aside, but on the contrary, all the evidence necessary that they are by his approbation continued in the church under the present dispensation. On the other hand, we have no evidence in the scriptures, that uninspired songs were ever used in the service of God, with his approbation; and the use of them is liable to many serious objections. The conclusion then is, that an inspired Psalmody, we are sure, has the warrant and approbation of God; and to lay it aside must be sin. We cannot be sure that an uninspired Psalmody has the divine warrant, but we have many and powerful reasons to think it has not. Now if these things are so, the path of duty to every one who fears God is so plain, that he that runs may read.

If the Psalms of David, originally written in Hebrew, were designed by God to be the matter of the church's praise to the end of time, which we think the above remarks satisfactorily evince, it becomes a matter of the very last importance for the church to employ a correct translation of them in its vernacular tongue, suited to this exercise. This was duly appreciated by the Reformation Churches in Britain. On becoming acquainted with the care which they took in the matter, let candor say, if equal care has been taken in the preparation of any other Psalmody since that period.

In speaking of this version, much sophistry and misrepresentation, have been employed either ignorantly or maliciously, by the advocates of human compositions. One of the most common of these, is, to call Watts' *Imitation*, a *Version*, and then to say, that "he had as good a right, and was as well qualified to make a version of the Psalms, as Rouse, or any other man." Setting aside the subject of qualification as a matter of no moment in this argument, the misrepresentation of which I speak cannot be better exposed than Dr. M'Master has done it, in his *Apology for the Book of Psalms*. I quote from the first edition, page 162. On the oft repeated assertion that Dr. Watts had as good a right to translate the Psalms as Mr. Rouse, he remarks,

"The equality of the right is not denied, but the assertion is calculated to deceive the unthinking. It assumes the fact, that the production of Watts is a *version*, which is *not* true. It was designed as a *substitute* for every fair translation; one of its excellencies is said to be its *remoteness* from the original. That called Rouse's *paraphrase*, is intended as and really is, a fair version; though not so perfect as to preclude improve-

ment. Let it, however, be kept in mind, that a greater departure from the *thought* and *language* of the Holy Ghost, would constitute no part of this improvement. It must be again repeated, that the contest is not between *version* and *version* ; but between *translation* and *imitation* ; between *inspired songs*, and those of *human composure*. The assertion of the disputer is this : Dr. Watts had as good a right to imitate the Book of Psalms, as Mr. Rouse had to translate it ; and we have the same right to employ, in the worship of God, the imitation, that others have to use the translation.—The argument is of the same species as this—The British divines, in the reign of James I, made a version of the Bible ; therefore, Ethan Allen had as good a right to make his bible ; and those who choose it, have as good a right to employ it, as others have to use the translation, for the rule of their faith and manners ! The value of the argument, thus applied, every christian can appreciate.”

Another misrepresentation here, is, “that as Rouse was not inspired, his version of the Psalms is no more inspired than the psalms of Watts or any other.” The principle from which this remark derives all its weight against an inspired Psalmody is dangerous in the extreme, and happily is as false as dangerous. It is an assertion that would raze the foundations of the Christian’s faith and hope, and not only at one sweep deprive us of a revelation of the will of God, but render it forever impossible we should have one, unless the same spirit who inspired the penmen of the Scriptures shall inspire its translators also. For if a correct version of the Psalms, even though in verse, is not inspired because its author had not the gift of inspiration, neither are our English bibles the word of God, for excellent and capable men as our translators were, the gift of inspiration they never enjoyed. If this argument then is conclusive against the inspiration of the Psalms of David in English metre, it is equally so against the inspiration of the Old and New Testaments in English prose. And if it is not a sound argument against the one, as all will admit, neither can it be against the other. Thus then stands the case. Watts’ is not a correct translation of the book of Psalms, nor indeed a translation at all.—That which is *erroneously* called Rouse’s Version is ; and in the opinion of the best judges is among the best translations, yea, the very best, that yet exists ; and of course is as much inspired as any portion of our English bibles.

Another device used to depress and to sink into contempt the Psalms of David is, constantly to represent them and speak of them as "*Rouse's Psalms*" and "*Rouse's version*;" as if the version which they so denominate was the sole production of Francis Rouse, *verbatim et literatim*, as it was left by him. This is an art by which the unthinking are led aside from the truth, and imperceptibly induced to believe that the sum of the controversy about Psalmody is nothing more, than whether Watts or Rouse shall stand highest in public favour—a question in itself not worth a single straw, nor, if decided, of any consequence to this argument. The truth is, that Rouse's version has never been in use in the church in England since the days of the Westminster Assembly, if indeed it ever was, and in Scotland, it is certain it never was in use at all. About 1643, Rouse's version was sent by Parliament to the Assembly of divines at Westminster, to be revised and corrected to fit it for the use of the Church. The first thing they did was, "to dismiss from it every extraneous composition, being determined to keep not only to the sense, but as far as possible to the very words of Scripture. In this labour they were assisted by the general assembly of the Scottish Kirk," and after being revised in England, it was sent to Scotland for further correction and improvement, and after "*MANY ALTERATIONS WERE MADE ON THE ORIGINAL COPY*," it was adopted in 1645. This copy, so carefully revised by the Westminster Assembly was again taken up by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1647, with a view to farther revision, in order to its being adopted as the Psalmody of the church. To ensure greater accuracy, it was divided into four portions and committed to different individuals, who were instructed in their examination of it "not only to observe what they thought needed amendment, but to set down their own essay for correcting it, and to make use of the labours of Rowallan, Zachary Boyd, former translators, or of any other, on the subject; but especially of the version begun by Sternhold and Hopkins, and finished by the exiles at Geneva," which was the version then in use in that church. Those to whom this task was committed entered on their labours with zeal, and in their progress were assisted by the different Presbyteries. Their report was the subject of serious deliberation at different meetings of the General Assembly and commissions of that body, and by the Presbyteries generally: and when the whole was sufficiently

matured this interesting cause was issued on the 23d of November, 1649, by the following decision :

“ The commission of the General Assembly having with great diligence considered the paraphrase of the Psalms in metre, sent from the Assembly of Divines in England by our commissioners whilst they were there, as it was corrected by former General Assemblies, committees from them, and now at last by the brethren deputed by the late Assembly for that purpose ; and, having exactly examined the same, do approve the said paraphrase, as it is now compiled ; and therefore, by the power given them by the said Assembly, do appoint it to be printed and published for public use : hereby authorizing the same to be the only paraphrase of the Psalms of David to be sung in the Kirk of Scotland ; and discharging the old paraphrase, and any other than this new paraphrase to be made use of in any congregation or family after the first day of May, in the year 1650. And, for uniformity in this part of the worship of God, do seriously recommend to Presbyteries, to cause make an intimation of this act, and take special care that the same be timeously put to execution and duly observed. A. KERR.”

With what truth or propriety then can a version that has been so often revised, altered and corrected by the most distinguished bodies of divines that ever England or Scotland produced, be called Rouse’s version ? Let the candid judge. Unquestionably never before nor since was such care taken to have a correct version of the scripture songs ; never perhaps was a matter of such importance undertaken by men more competent to the task ; and to their diligence, zeal and ability, under Providence, are we indebted for a version of the Psalms of David, in metre, which even to this day, is “ MORE PLAIN, SMOOTH AND AGREEABLE TO THE ORIGINAL TEXT THAN ANY HERETOFORE.”

After all, however, it is not maintained that in a very few words an improvement might not be made. After a lapse of nearly two hundred years, it is not surprising that in a few instances, the mode of expression should appear uncouth, and fall awkward on the fastidious ear of modern taste. The wonder rather is, that, there is so very little of this in a composition so old. But while the Christian, who is a true friend to the Psalms of the Bible, has no objection to consult taste where it may be safely done, he knows that it would be presumption in any man or church at present to substitute a new

version, and he feels it would be purchasing this gratification of taste at too great a price to obtain it at the expense of removing a single idea which the divine Spirit has indited, or of debasing the pure gold, by the addition of a single thought of meaner origin. It is not by the harmony of sweet flowing verse, however agreeable this may be, but by the pure milk of the word of God that the soul is nourished up unto everlasting life. The pleasures of taste, are entirely of a different kind from those which the heaven born soul derives from the word of God.— It is pleasure of this latter kind, that a man rightly exercised seeks and finds by appropriating the words of divine truth for his song of praise. This they are capable of affording even in the humblest dress ; and where this happiness is enjoyed, the loss of the other will not be greatly felt. But, we cannot admit that the Christian has any thing to deduct from his happiness, in this exercise, on account of any deficiency of gratifications of this kind. We have no fear of contradiction, from any quarter, worthy of regard, when we assert, that the merely intellectual man, will find a richer feast in the Psalms of David in metre, than in any piece of human composition, whatever. But, though this is true, we also freely admit, that it is the spiritual taste that can best appreciate the songs of inspiration ; and the more generally this is diffused among professing Christians, the less will they relish the ephemeral conceits of fellow mortals, and the more will they delight themselves in the word and ordinances of the eternal God.

THE NECESSITY OF GOOD WORKS.

In this section I shall first endeavor to show for what purposes good works are *not* necessary ; and next, in what respects, or for what ends, they *are* necessary.

In the first place I am to show for what purposes they are *not* necessary.

1. Good works are not necessary to *move God to be merciful and gracious* to us. They are not needful to recommend us so to the favor of God, as to *excite* his compassion and good will to us, or to produce the smallest change in his intentions concerning us. The change to be promoted by the continual practice of good works will be only in ourselves. It cannot

be in God. "He is in one mind, and who can turn him?" He is Jehovah, he changeth not. Our holy performances do not render God more willing than he is already, to show mercy, or give grace to us; but they are means of rendering ourselves more and more willing to receive his mercy and his grace. We must, then, never depend on our own good works, but always on the spotless righteousness of Christ, and on the gracious promises of God, for all the effects of his mercy and favor.

2. Our good works are not necessary to *afford us a right to trust in Christ* for salvation. They cannot obtain for us a right to believe in the Lord Jesus; nor is it requisite that they should. The commandment of the law to believe in the name of Jesus Christ, (1 John iii. 25,) together with the offers, invitations, and promises of the gospel, affords us all the right or warrant that is requisite to come as sinners to the Savior, and to place the confidence of our hearts in him for his whole salvation. These afford to us, in common with all the other hearers of the gospel, a full right, as sinners of mankind, to approach and, with the firmest confidence, to trust in him; and, therefore, we have no need to procure by our performances the smallest degree of right to come to him.—(Isa. lv. 1, Rev. xxii, 17.) Our good works are necessary for other purposes, but not for this. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*," and "not to call the righteous, but *sinners* to repentance." We must, therefore, approach and trust in him as *sinners* utterly unworthy of him; and that, without looking for any good qualities or works of our own, either to recommend us to his regard or to entitle us to trust that he will save us. How can our good works be necessary to afford us a right to trust in the Savior, when we must begin to trust in him *before* we can perform the smallest good work?

3. Neither are good works necessary to *acquire for us a personal interest in Christ*. So far are they from being requisite to merit, or so much as to *obtain* for us a saving interest in Jesus Christ; that our being previously interested in him is indispensably necessary to our being capable of performing so much as the very smallest of them. (Eph. i, 6. John xv, 5.) Good works, then, can have no place in procuring for us a personal interest in the Savior. It is necessary to qualify us for *them*; but they are not necessary to confer on us a right to *it*. They are indeed an evidence of it, but not a procur-

ing cause: they follow upon it, but do not go before it. They can have no existence before it, and therefore they can neither entitle us to it nor qualify us for the reception of it. A personal interest in Christ must either be received as a gift of sovereign grace, by faith only, or not received at all. Many convinced sinners err greatly in this matter. They hope that their reformatations, their frames, and their performances will so recommend them to God as to procure for them a saving interest in the person and work of Christ. Thus they, themselves, try to *begin* the work of their salvation, and then to trust that the Savior will help it forward. But this is to "seek righteousness not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, and to stumble at that stumbling-stone." (Rom. ix, 32.) No man can attain a saving interest in Christ, until he be made willing to receive it as a gift of infinitely free grace.

4. Good works are not requisite to *acquire for us a right to increasing degrees of sanctification*. We ought, indeed, to employ them diligently as means of growing in habits of grace; but we must not hence conclude, that they are needful to *procure* for us a title to those influences of sanctifying grace, which are every moment requisite for increasing our habits of grace, and exciting them to exercise. They are necessary as means, and also as evidences, but not as procuring causes, of progressive holiness. It is not the good fruit that makes the tree good; but on the contrary, it is the good tree that produces the good fruit. It is not the good works of believers, but the infinitely perfect righteousness of the second Adam, that entitles them to increasing holiness, both of heart and life. And therefore, while they ought to be diligent and zealous, in performing all good works; they must not presume to place the least dependence on their performance of them for a title to continued supplies, of sanctifying or of comforting grace. Instead of trusting to their own endeavors, for a continual increase of inherent holiness, their duty is, to rely on the righteousness of Jesus Christ, for their *whole* title to it. They ought to rely on his surety-righteousness, as much, for a title to sanctification, as a right to justification. It is by faith in the Lord Jesus, as their "righteousness and strength," that they are sanctified as well as justified. (Acts xv. 9. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Col. ii. 12.) While then they trust constantly in Christ himself for continual supplies of sanctifying grace; they must, instead of depending on their own works, rely

daily on his righteousness alone, for *all their title* to those supplies. Though good works are indispensably necessary, *in* them who are sanctified ; yet they are so far from being requisite to procure for the saints, a title to progressive sanctification, that these could not perform so much as one of them, till *after* they began to be sanctified.

5. Once more: Good works have no place in *obtaining for the saints, a right to eternal life in heaven.* "Eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." It is "a purchased possession ;" purchased for all his spiritual seed, by the obedience unto death of the second Adam. It is an inheritance, which He "the heir of all things," bequeaths to them, and of which they attain possession, not on the ground of their own good works, but by union and communion with Him. It is not their own good deeds, but his righteousness, that is meritorious of eternal life for them. "Not by works of righteousness which *we have done*," says the Apostle Paul, "but according to his mercy he saved us." (Tit. iii. 5.) It is Christ only, who "hath obtained eternal redemption" for believers. (Heb. ix. 12.) They are accepted as righteous in the sight of God, and entitled to eternal life, not for their own good works, but "*only* for the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and received by faith alone." It is "by the righteousness of *one*," that grace, or "the free gift, comes upon all men who believe, unto justification of life : " For,—"*by the obedience of one*, shall many be made righteous." (Rom. v. 18, 19.) Were the good works of believers, to entitle them in the smallest degree to salvation, their salvation would, in the same degree, be of *debt* to them, and not of grace. But it is not by any merit of theirs, but by the sovereign grace of God, that they are saved." (Eph. ii. 8, 9.) Besides, if their good works afforded them a right or claim to eternal life, it would inevitably follow, That they could not have a right to it, till *after* they had performed them *all*. But the infinitely perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, gives them in their justification, a complete right to life eternal, and that *before* they begin to do one good work. (Rom. iv. 4—6.) Indeed believers, although they could perform even perfect obedience, could yet yield no degree of obedience, but what they *owed* to the Lord ; and therefore, even their *perfect* obedience, could not merit the least favor from Him. And as their good works, can give them no meritorious right to eternal life ; so neither can they afford them a *pactional* title to it : for, by the

consummate righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to them, they have already, both the *one* right, and the *other*, and that in the *highest possible* degree. Though good works then are not necessary, in order to procure or obtain, a *right* to eternal salvation ; yet they are the necessary *duties* of all, who are justified and entitled to that salvation. They are the *consequences* of salvation already procured ; and they are the *antecedents*, which prepare believers for the salvation to be still attained. At the same time, however, they are not *causes* of obtaining the possession, either of the beginning, or the progress, or the consummation of salvation. They are indispensably necessary, in all adult persons who shall be saved ; but not necessary, to *obtain* or acquire salvation. Believers are saved, not by their works, but *to* them, as effects, and evidences, of their salvation already begun. These words of the apostle Paul, "They do it to *obtain* a corruptible crown, but we, an incorruptible," will not prove, that good works are necessary to *obtain* eternal salvation : for the verb in the Original, properly signifies, to *receive*, or *apprehend* ; (1 Cor. ix. 25.) and, it is so rendered by our Translators, in the immediately preceding verse. Believers are not saved, either *by* their works, or *for* them, or *according to* them. Not *by* them ; "Not *BY* works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, &c." (Tit. iii. 5.) Not *for* them ; Not *FOR* your sake do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you. (Ezek. xxxvi. 32.) Not *according to* them ; "He hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, *not* *ACCORDING TO* our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." (2 Tim. i. 9.) Men are, indeed, to be judged according to their works ; but are not to be saved according to them. The rule of judgment will be the law ; but the rule of salvation will be the gospel.

(To be continued.)

SABBATH SICKNESS.

(From the New-York Observer.)

I suspect that there is twice as much sickness in the United States on the Sabbath, as on any other day of the week ; and I am quite sure there is about as much medicine taken on that day as on all the rest.

These alarming facts, if they *are* facts, deserve immediate and earnest investigation. It cannot be owing to climate, to miasma, or to any sudden changes of temperature, because these are liable to affect the health, just as much, one day as another. Much less can we ascribe it to any special divine visitation, to disable people from attending public worship on the Sabbath, when they are able to be out and attending to their secular business from Monday morning till Saturday night.— This would be a reflection upon the great Lord of the Sabbath, as if he had given men one day in seven for religious duties and privileges, and then deprived them of its advantages, by shutting them up to be bled and take emetics.

As the sickness of which I am speaking, prevails all over the country, so it affects all classes, though not in the same degree. The industrious, hard laboring classes, are more apt to be down on the Sabbath, than the rich and fashionable. The latter cannot, or will not *afford* it, as many of them want the day for riding, sailing and visiting their friends. The laboring people in the cities, are not so liable to these periodical attacks, as in the country; and the reason seems to be the same; they want the Sabbath for relaxation, with which the operation of active medicine would seriously interfere. It is moreover a circumstance worth noticing, that professors of religion, as a class, are less liable to Sabbath sickness than any other class. Nevertheless, there are quite too many anomalous cases even in the church: I think I have known some persons, of considerable pretensions to piety, who by living in the midst of the Sabbath fever contagion, or from some other cause, have complained of being *poorly*, and excused themselves from attending public worship, when the prospect of some little worldly gain would have worked like a charm, to throw off the symptoms, on any other day of the week.

Although making no pretensions to the healing art myself, and therefore unable to afford the Faculty much, if any aid, in their diagnostic investigations, it may be expected of me, that I should be a little more particular in showing how the sickness now under consideration, generally comes on, and how it is most commonly relieved; I say *relieved* not *cured*, for it is exceedingly apt to break out again in a few Sabbaths after it seems to be entirely expelled from the system. These then are the usual symptoms. A little more work is undertaken on the farm or in the shop than can conveniently be performed. As a matter of course, extra efforts are necessary. Nature, by the middle of the week, begins to complain that she is not fairly dealt by, and to call for relaxation. If her voice is not heeded, she raises it louder. The man confesses that he does not feel well, and that he needs rest and medicine. But he cannot afford to lie by on a week day. The Sabbath is approaching, and then he shall be at leisure and will attend to himself. So he drags through the week as best he can; and at the close of it, or on Sabbath morning, sends off for a good portion of Glauber, or Epsom, or Epicac. More generally, perhaps, especially in haying and harvest, the medicine is sent for on Sabbath morning, as sickness, every body knows, must be attended to.

The Sabbath invalid in these cases, gets up late. You would hardly know him to be the same man whom you saw the day before in the field. He complains of weakness in the joints, nausea, dizziness and the like ; calls for his tumbler of salts, and crust of bread ; looks at the potion most ruefully ; but it is of no use to stand dreading it. So he shuts his eyes and hardens his heart, and drinks it off at a swallow.

Or if it is an emetic, he prepares for it right manfully. He could not get time to take it any sooner, and it will not, he thinks, do to put it off any longer, especially as he must resume his labors again on Monday morning. *Must* resume them, not because he is too *poor* to spare a day for "doctoring," but because he can save it by being sick on the Sabbath. And when others are in the house of God, and he is on his bed, he blesses himself that he does not stay away from church without the least reason in the world ; and perchance wonders that any who are well, can saunter about the fields, when they ought to be in the house of prayer. If a man is sick on the Sabbath, he is sick, and that is enough, however he came so. This is his logic. Sometimes the Sabbath sickness comes on suddenly, in the morning. A little cloud arises. It may rain. And what if it should ? Would the prospect of getting a little wet prevent the individual from going out on any other day ? Is he afraid of lightning ? O no, unless it be *Sabbath day* lightning. But now, all at once, he finds out, that he is not very well. He is afraid he shall take cold, and so he stops at home. In your opinion the excuse is not valid, and you try to convince him of it ; but there is something which he calls *conscience*, that he says justifies him.—"Mercy," he argues, "is better than sacrifice," and every one is bound to take care of his health.

Now, Messrs. Editors, can you tell what is the best way of treating these Sabbath day sicknesses, and of preventing them from spreading ? If you can, I hope you will inform the public at once. It is really a very serious matter. Thousands are suffering from them who ought to be cured, if possible. If these diseases are permitted to run on, they will become chronic, and of course more and more obstinate.—It may be desirable to *die* on the Lord's day, but to be kept away from the sanctuary, by any of the Sabbath intermittents, is a very different affair. Certainly, it is no way to prepare for that "rest, which remaineth for the people of God."

These hebdomidal visitations are extremely troublesome to conscientious physicians, and afford others more plausible excuses than they can safely be trusted with, for absenting themselves from public worship. In some places, the doctor is sure of having something to do on the Sabbath, however it may be on other days. Just as he is getting ready to go with his family to church, somebody calls with his arm in a sling, or with an invalid wife, or child and detains him. Or a messenger rides foaming up from the out-skirts, or a neighboring town, and nothing will do but he must go and visit Mr. such an one.

"How long has he been sick ?" "He has been drooping all the week." "Why did you not send before ?" "We hoped he would get along without doctoring." "Why then could you not wait one day

longer?" "We are afraid he will get worse." And so the Sabbath is broken up, unless the physician has the independence, which is sometimes the case, either to decline entirely, or to put off the visit till after the public services.

Not unfrequently it is even worse than this. It is a matter of calculation, on the part of too many, to send for the physician on the Sabbath, in preference to any other day, when their friends have long been in bad health, and there is no more urgency than there was for days, or weeks before. It is done to *save time*. On week days they are otherwise engaged, and all they can save in this way, is counted as so much clear gain. Thus are thousands of physicians virtually deprived of their Sabbaths, by these time and money saving, but soul destroying calculations. And people expect the blessing of God just as much upon the prescriptions of the doctor, or to get well without that blessing just as soon, as if they "kept his Sabbaths and revered his sanctuary." But they have no right to insist upon the attendance of physicians, to the neglect of these institutions, in cases which might be just as well attended to a little earlier, or a little later.

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

We have endeavored to apprise our readers from time to time of the interesting movements that have been and still are in progress in the established Church of Scotland, in relation to the question of Patronage and others connected with it. The present collision between that church and the civil power, cannot but issue in a result, deeply important to the cause of truth and religious liberty. For this reason we desire to keep it before the minds of our readers, and intend to furnish them with whatever may seem to be instructive and interesting on the matter. The following extracts from an article in the London Examiner present a condensed view of the origin and progress of the difficulty at present existing between the ecclesiastical and civil powers. It remains to be seen which of the parties at issue in the matter will yield. The celebrated Dr. Chalmers takes an active part in the proceedings of the General Assembly, having supported the motion by which the seven ministers were suspended, and having "published a long address to the 'Dignitaries and Ecclesiastics at large of the Church of England,' imploring their aid to preserve the Church of Scotland from *the destruction with which it is threatened by the civil power*."

The Church of Scotland has lately been the theatre of proceedings which have not only created vast excitement in the North, but are

likely, ere they terminate, to prove of more extended interest, from the new and striking light they are calculated to throw on the nature of ecclesiastical establishments. We may be excused for giving a brief narrative of the whole matter, from its commencement to its present state. The exercise of patronage was at one time very unpopular in Scotland. It had been an early principle of the church, that clergymen should not be intruded on parishes contrary to the consent of the parishioners. When a patron presents, it is for the presbytery to say whether the presentee is qualified, and to refuse collation if he is not. The church professed to call the presentee's acceptability to the parishioners a necessary qualification, and in 1834, passed their "Veto Act," instructing all presbyteries to reject presentees to whom a majority of male heads of families in communion with the church objected. In the case of the Auchterarder presentation, when this was acted on, the presentee brought an action in the civil courts to declare it an undue interference with his civil rights. The church said,—this is a matter purely ecclesiastical; the civil and the church courts have their respective jurisdictions; this is ours entirely, and the civil court must not interfere. The Court of Session said,—we are here to protect men's property; patronage has been constituted property by act of Parliament; whether rightly so or not, it is a commodity that may be bought and sold; you have attempted to deprive a proprietor of the use of it, under a pretence, and we must stop you. The Church appealed to the House of Lords. The judgment of the court below was confirmed. In the ensuing Assembly, there was a sharp conflict on the question whether the law should be obeyed, and it was resolved that they should not obey the civil courts. At the same time presbyteries were instructed to report disputed cases to the next Assembly. Meanwhile a presentee had obtained from the Court of Session an interdict to prohibit a presbytery from putting the veto act into operation. An interdict is a prohibitory writ, somewhat resembling an injunction in chancery. The presbytery defied the interdict, and were brought before the bar of the court for contempt. They were then told that as the offence was the first of the kind, the court would merely solemnly reprimand them, but that the next similar offence would be visited by punishment. This was the much talked of Lethendy case. The affair has lately assumed a totally new aspect, from the appearance on the stage of a presbytery anxious to act according to the decision of the civil courts. A presentee to the parish of Marnock in the presbytery of Strathbogie was vetoed. The presbytery applied to the superior ecclesiastical courts for advice. They directed the presentee to be rejected; this was before the decisions above alluded to. The presentee applied to the Court of Session, which directed the presbytery to take him on trial, and admit him to the cure should he be found competent. Thus perplexed by two masters, the presbytery, by a large majority, decided on obeying the civil court. Immediately on their doing this, the Commission of the General Assembly commenced its sittings. This is, in fact, a committee of the whole House of the Assembly. It can only transact such business as the Assembly, in

its legislative capacity, gives it to do ; an arrangement for saving the necessity of a royal commissioner being present during the routine business of the Assembly, and part of the compromise which was made between the Church and the Government, when the former was allowed its nominal independence, while the latter put a watch over its meetings. To this body the presbytery were instructed to report their proceedings, and they did so. The Commission suspended seven clergymen from their functions, which they directed others to perform in their place. An act of this kind must, according to form, be intimated to the parties at their churches. Sabbath last, the 22d, was the day on which the persons appointed were to perform this duty, and to preach in the churches of the recusants. The suspended clergymen, with great sagacity, looked to the court whose decree they were obeying, for protection ; and on Friday an interdict was issued, prohibiting all persons from molesting them in the discharge of their usual functions, and intruding in the churches, church-yards, or schools of the respective parishes. Here the matter rests.

COME AND WELCOME TO THE SAVIOR.

Let all classes of the unhappy repair to the Christian truth, and draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation ! Assume your own characters, O ye children of men. Present your grievances, and accept the consolation which the gospel tenders.

Come now, ye tribes of pleasure, who have exhausted your strength in pursuing phantoms which retire at your approach ! The voice of the Son of God in the gospel is, " Wherefore spend ye your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not ; hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness ! "

Come, ye tribes of ambition, who burn for the applause of your fellow worms. The voice of the Son of God to you is, " the friendship of this world is enmity with God ; but if any man serve me, him will my Father honor. "

Come ye avaricious, who pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor. The voice of the Son of God is, " Wisdom is more precious than rubies ; and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her—but what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul. "

Come ye profane ! The voice of the Son of God is, "Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness ; behold, I bring near my righteousness."

Come, ye formal and self-sufficient, who say that ye are rich ; and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and know not that ye are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. The voice of the Son of God is, "I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire that ye may be rich ! and white raiment that ye may be clothed ; and that the shame of your nakedness do not appear ; and anoint your eyes with eye-salve, that ye may see."

Come ye who convinced of sin, fear lest the fierce anger of the Lord fall upon you. The voice of the Son of God is, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out, I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

Come ye disconsolate, whose souls are sad, because the Comforter is away. The voice of the Son of God is, "The Lord hath sent me to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Come ye tempted, who are borne down with the violence of the law in your members, and of assaults from the evil one. The voice of the Son of God is, "I will be merciful to your unrighteousness ; and the God of peace will bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

Come, ye children of domestic woe, upon whom the Lord has made a breach by taking away your counsellors and support. The voice of the Son of God is, "Leave thy fatherless children with me ; I will preserve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me."

Come, ye from whom mysterious Providence has swept away the acquisitions of long and reputable industry. The voice of the Son of God is, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, thou shalt have a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, and mayest take joyfully the spoiling of thy goods, knowing that thou hast in heaven a better and an enduring substance."

Come, ye poor, who, without property to lose, are grappling with distress, and exposed to want. The Son of God, though the heir of all things, had not where to lay his head, and his voice to his poor is, "Be content with such things as ye have, for I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure."

Come, ye reproached, who find cruel mockings a most bitter persecution. The voice of the Son of God is, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of God and of glory resteth upon you."

Come, in fine, ye dejected, whom the fear of death holds in bondage. The voice of the Son of God is, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues! O grave, I will be thy destruction! repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."

Blessed Jesus! thy loving kindness shall be my joy in the house of my pilgrimage! and I will praise thee while I have any being, for that gospel which thou hast preached to the poor!

MASON.

ECCLESIASTICAL PROCEEDINGS.

Western Sub. Synod.—At a recent meeting of this court, the Rev. William Niell, formerly belonging to the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery, a small body that separated from the Associate Reformed Church, acceded to the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Mr. Niell had, for a considerable time before making application to be united with our church, turned his attention with great care and prayerful investigation to her distinctive doctrines, order and usages, and became at length fully satisfied that they were truly scriptural, and therefore to be chosen and embraced in preference to those maintained and observed by the body to which he belonged, or by any other denomination of professing christians. He hesitated not to make the sacrifices necessary to become enrolled among the covenanted Witnesses of Christ, his truth and cause. After fully satisfying the court, answering each of the questions prescribed in the Formula, and subscribing the ecclesiastical standards of the church; he was admitted as a minister in full and regular standing, his brethren giving him the right hand of fellowship.

By the withdrawal of Mr. Niell from the body to which he formerly belonged, that body became disorganized, as there remained but one minister attached to it. As he can hold no Presbytery, nor perform any Presbyterian act according to the scripture, or the principles of Presbyterian Church government founded thereon, not even under the plea of *ne-*

cessity, the *Reformed Dissenting Presbytery* is dissolved. In its dissolution an admonition is tendered by the Church's Head and King to the people formerly under its care to review the stand which they have occupied, and to reflect seriously upon their present condition. Refusing on just and more than sufficient grounds to continue in or embrace the communion of the Associate Reformed Church, as their fathers and they have refused, and failing in the Providence of God, in the attempt to occupy a station somewhat near the Witnesses of Christ, when their duty was and is to identify with these Witnesses, to whom they approximated, we hope they may now be made to see more clearly the duty and advantage of coming fully up to the high ground of Reformation attainments. To such of them as may see our pages, we address in the spirit of meekness and of love, the language of the Spirit of God, "Wherefore come out from among them; and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Southern Presbytery.—At the recent semi-annual meeting of this Presbytery, two young men, James Niell, who has spent one session in the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, under the care of Professor Symington, Scotland, and James W. Shaw, were admitted as students of Theology. Besides other ordinary business, none of which is of general interest, the following appointments of supplies of Gospel ordinances were made for vacant congregations.

1. J. R. Willson, *first* and *second* Sabbaths of August, Argyle, to dispense there the sacrament of the Lord's supper on the *second* Sabbath of August, assisted by S. M. Willson.

2. S. M. Willson, *third* Sabbath of August, Argyle: one Sabbath at Barnet, and one at Ryegate.

3. M. Roney, *second* and *third* Sabbaths of August, Kortright, to dispense there the sacrament of the Lord's supper on the *third* Sabbath of August, assisted by D. Scott; and one Sabbath, White Lake.

4. D. Scott, *fourth* Sabbath of August, Bovina.

5. J. M. Willson, *second* and *third* Sabbaths of August, Conococheague. *First* and *fourth* Sabbaths of August, Baltimore.

6. A. Stevenson, *fourth* Sabbath of August, Conococheague, and to dispense there the sacrament of the Lord's supper on the *third* Sabbath of August, assisted by J. M. Willson.

General Synod.—The supreme judicatory of our church met in Allegheny on the 16th ult., and continued its sessions by adjournment till the 26th. A large number of delegates was present. The meeting was highly interesting and important, and, upon the whole, may be justly characterized as agreeable and harmonious. Evidently the presence and counsel of the Church's Head were with his servants, seated on the throne of Judgment. As the entire minutes will be published in our next No. which is in a state of forwardness, and will be issued as soon as possible, we do not anticipate by any detail the more satisfactory and official account which they will soon furnish to our readers. The No. will be published about the 18th inst.

A SCHISM.

It is said, and we believe with truth, that on the day following that on which the adjournment of General Synod took place, Messrs. Lusk and Steele undertook to form and organize for themselves a Presbytery. Something like this had been anticipated before the meeting of Synod, but the fact that Mr. Steele sat all the time of Synod as a regular member, and Mr. Lusk as a consultative member, both taking an active part in the proceedings throughout, and both continuing to and through the time of adjournment, without making even an attempt to open a door by which they might get out of the church as aggrieved persons, or even intimating that they were aggrieved, caused any, who had indulged a suspicion that they meant to make a schism, to dismiss that suspicion as groundless. It seems however, that their design, though kept covert, was not abandoned. What reasons may have influenced them to hold their seats in Synod till the last, and how they will reconcile this with common honesty and candor, not to speak of the candor, honesty and frankness becoming ministers of Christ, sitting upon a throne of judgment, when they had contrived and were still determined upon making a schismatical separation from that very Synod soon after its adjournment, remain to be seen. Expecting that they will apprise the public by and by of these things, and being ourselves unable to frame reasons satisfactory which we should like to impute to them, we will leave them to speak for themselves. We expect to lay before our readers in a future No. a more full account of the matter,

and to furnish proof conclusive that their separation is what we have called it,—A SCHISM. Being conducted in entire secrecy too, as the matter was, our readers may consult with advantage, in forming their opinion of it, John iii. 20, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

Except for his own sake, we have not a feeling of regret at the abandonment of the church by Mr. Lusk. Many know his character and conduct before the time that the Synod suspended him, we believe in 1825. From that period until some months before his restoration by Synod in 1834, his course as an insubordinate ecclesiastic, and his moral character, are before the public, especially in the West. Since the time of his restoration, those who have had the best opportunity of knowing can tell to what extent he has proved a blessing and an honor to the church, or the contrary. Time will decide whether in his new confederacy, he will show a change of disposition and of conduct.

As for Mr. Steele, had he continued to manifest the spirit and pursue the course which seemed to us and some others to mark his character and conduct until about two and a half years ago, we would have deeply regretted his present divisive course as a loss to the church.—But really, judging from the course which he has for a while past been pursuing in the congregation of which he was pastor, in the Presbytery of which he was a member, and elsewhere, as he had opportunity, we are constrained to believe and to say, that unless that course had been altered, the church has sustained no loss, but on the contrary, has received great gain by his withdrawal from her. If it is true that *ultra-ism* and insubordination have in all ages marred the interests of the church, then it is true that an *ultra* and one who cherishes, countenances and fosters a spirit of insubordination cannot prove a blessing to her.

By what name the new confederacy is to be known, we have not been able to learn; nor have we yet been able, by all the inquiry we could make, to ascertain the reasons which are to be put forth as the grounds of the schism. Conjecture says, and we have no doubt with perfect accuracy, that a certain individual, who made himself notorious at the meeting of Synod in 1838, and who has since been at the head of an extremely small and by no means enviable *ism*, called *Galyism*, has a full claim to parentage in the whole affair. But whether the new system shall not be known hereafter by the name of *Luskism*, or, to give it a little more respectability than either this or the former name, by the appellation of *Steeleism*, remains to be discovered.

In the meantime, we remind all true hearted Covenanters, who mourn for the afflictions of Zion, that such an event as that to which we have above referred, is no new thing under the sun. Time after time individuals have been found ready to mar the mystical body of Christ by schism. Let us however bear in mind the end to which all such have sooner or later been brought, in the Providence of the Church's Head, and be admonished to "mark them that cause divisions and offences, and avoid them."

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

AUGUST, 1840.

No. VI.

MINUTES

OF THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA.—SESSION XX.

ALLEGHENYTOWN, *June 16th, 1840,* }
half past 7 o'clock, P. M. }

Synod met according to adjournment, and after sermon by the Moderator, Rev. James Blackwood, from 1 Tim. v. 17, "*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine,*" was constituted with prayer.

Adjourned with prayer, to meet same place to-morrow at 9 o'clock, A. M.

Same place, June 17th, 9 o'clock, A. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. The members were ascertained, when there were present from the

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY,

Ministers.

James R. Willson, D. D.
David Scott,
M. Roney,
Andrew Stevenson,
James M. Willson.

Ruling Elders.

John Beattie,
Wm. Cowan, jr.

PITTSBURGH PRESBYTERY,

Thomas Sproull,
James Blackwood,
Hugh Walkinshaw,
John Crozier,
James Milligan,
James Love,

Thomas Gemmil,
James Dougherty,
John Love,
John Z. Willson,
Samuel Henry,
John Slater.

OHIO PRESBYTERY.

Robert Wallace,
John Wallace,
David Steele,

Wm. McKinley,
John Jamison,
William Wylie.

WESTERN PRESBYTERY OF W. S. SYNOD.

J. B. Johnston,
A. McFarland,

James Steele,
Rob't Scott,
William Adams.

There were no delegates present from the Western Presbytery of the E. S. Synod.

Rev. David Scott was appointed Moderator, Rev. J. B. Johnston, Clerk, Rev. M. Roney, Assistant Clerk. The Minutes of the last meeting of Synod were read and approved. On motion, Rev. R. Lusk, of the Ohio Presbytery, and Rev. Wm. Neill, of the Pittsburgh Presbytery, were admitted to seats as consultative members.

Papers were called for, and the following received:—No. 1, Synodical Treasurer's Report; No. 2, Petition from Session of 1st congregation, New-York, asking advice respecting a Sabbath school, and referred by the Southern Presbytery; No. 3, Report of Southern Presbytery on No. 2; No. 4, Petition from Lisbon, N. Y. asking supplies.

On motion the Court took a recess for thirty minutes. The time of recess having expired, the Court was called to order. The Moderator appointed the following Standing Committees:

1st. On Unfinished Business—J. Wallace and A. Stevenson, Ministers, with W. Wylie, Ruling Elder.

2nd. On Discipline—M. Roney and T. Sproull, Ministers, with W. Cowan, Ruling Elder.

3rd. On the Signs of the Times—J. R. Willson and J. Crozier, Ministers, with John Jamison, Ruling Elder.

4th. On Synodical Reports—J. Blackwood and R. Wallace, Ministers, with J. Z. Willson, Ruling Elder.

5th. On Foreign Correspondence—J. M. Willson and H. Walkinshaw, Ministers, with John Beattie, Ruling Elder.

6th. On Finance—A. McFarland, Minister, with W. Adams and W. McKinley, Ruling Elders.

7th. On the Theological Seminaries—J. Milligan and M. Roney, Ministers, with Samuel Henry, Ruling Elder.

A Memorial from members of Greenfield congregation was received and marked No. 5.

On motion, the papers were read and disposed of in order. No. 1 was read and referred to the Committee on Finance;

No. 2 was read and, on motion, laid on the table for the present; No. 3 was read and, on motion, laid on the table; No. 4 was read and, on motion, referred to the Committee on Synodical Reports; No. 5 was read and, on motion, referred to the Committee on the Theological Seminaries.

Adjourned by prayer, to meet same place at 3 o'clock, P. M.

Same place, 3 o'clock, P. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. All the members present. Minutes read.

A petition from Walnut Ridge, asking Synod to take action on voluntary associations, was presented, marked No. 6, read and, on motion, referred to the Committee on the Signs of the Times.

Papers containing protest and appeal by Jas. McKinney, from a decision of the Southern Presbytery, with accompanying documents, were received, marked No. 7, read and, on motion, laid on the table for the present.

A petition from Philadelphia was presented and marked No. 8. The Moderator decided that the paper was out of order, because, while purporting to be a petition, it contained a complaint, and no notice had been given to the inferior judicatory; from which decision an appeal was taken. The decision of the Moderator was not sustained. On motion, No. 8 was laid on the table for the present.

On motion resolved, That during the sessions of the present meeting of Synod, there be one session only each day.

Resolved, that Synod meet at half past 8 o'clock, A. M. and adjourn at 2 o'clock, P. M.

Resolved, that it be a standing rule of this Synod, that all papers be laid on the table before the close of the third business day, and that this rule take effect at this meeting of Synod in so far as relates to papers present.

Resolved, that the Synod meet same place to-morrow at 6 o'clock, P. M. for devotional exercises. Resolved, that the subject of devotional conversation be "The religious, moral and political signs of the times."

Resolved, that the committee on Synodical Reports be instructed to take under consideration the propriety of abolishing the Sub. Synods and the Delegated form of General Synod.

On motion by the chairman of the committee on Synodical reports, resolved, that a member be added to said com-

mittee. Rev. D. Steele was added.

Adjourned by prayer.

Same place, June 18th, half past 8 o'clock, A. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Absent, D. Steele and W. McKinley. Minutes read. Papers were called for and the following were presented: A petition from Topsham, marked No. 9; an appeal of D. Kenan, with accompanying documents, marked No. 10.

Resolved, that the committee on Synodical Reports be instructed to investigate and report to this court on the propriety of holding annual instead of biennial sessions of this judicatory.

The Western Sub. Synod presented their report, which, at their own request, was returned for completion.

The committee on the Theological Seminaries reported, on No. 5, an answer to the memorial from Greenfield. On motion the paper was returned to the committee with instructions to write a pastoral letter to the memorialists.

No. 9 was taken up, read and referred to the Committee on Discipline.

No. 10 was taken up, read and, on motion, laid on the table for the present.

The Committee on Unfinished Business reported as follows:

The Committee on unfinished business beg leave to report the following items:

1. An order to the clerk to copy into a book the minutes of synod, including the reports.
 2. A resolution by Mr. Milligan, postponing the consideration of the overture on church government until this meeting of synod.
 3. A preamble and resolution by Dr. Willson, respecting the institution and power of deacons, and the law of the church on that subject.
 4. A committee consisting of Dr. Willson and M. Roney to publish the modified form of the jury act.
 5. Do. to publish the article on covenanting.
 6. An order to the clerk to forward to each of the sister Synods of Ireland and Scotland 25 copies of our minutes.
 7. Days of fasting and thanksgiving were appointed.
 8. A resolution directing the clerk to collect a series of the printed minutes, and have them bound at the expense of synod.
 9. A resolution directing the congregations to raise by collections \$200, and forward to Synod's treasurer to pay Dr. Willson.
- All which is respectfully submitted.

JNO. WALLACE, *Chairman.*

On motion the report was accepted and taken up article by article. On item 1st the answer was satisfactory. On

motion the consideration of item 2nd was deferred for the present.

On motion, the preamble and resolution referred to in item 3rd was taken up for consideration. D. Steele and W. McKinley appeared.

The following preamble and resolution were offered by M. Roney and adopted :

Whereas a preamble and resolution in the following words

“ Whereas some doubts have arisen on the subject of Deacons, as to their institution and power : Therefore

Resolved, That so much of the form of government, drawn up by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, as relates to the divine right and power of deacons, with their institution, is the law of this church on that subject.”

were laid on the table at last meeting of Synod ; and

Whereas the said preamble and resolution have given rise to much dissatisfaction as casting reflection upon and subjecting to suspicion some person or persons not named ; and

Whereas this Synod never intended to cast any such reflection, nor knew nor believed that there existed any just ground for such suspicion ; and

Whereas the form of the preamble and resolution is such, that a vote in the affirmative will necessarily imply the belief of the existence of doubts respecting the institution and power of Deacons ; while a vote in the negative will imply a relinquishment of the part of the form of Church Government relating to Deacons, thus rendering it impossible to give a free vote in the case ; therefore

Resolved, that said resolution be deemed unnecessary, as the subject is to come up in another connection during the present sessions.

On enquiry it was found that the direction in item 4 had been attended to.

On item 5 the clerk reported that *he* did not attend to the direction, but that it had been attended to substantially by another.

On item 6, enquiry being made, the answers were deemed satisfactory.

On item 7, the clerk reported that he had endeavored to obtain the object, but failed in part.

Item 8 was referred to the committee on Finance.

Adjourned by prayer.

Same place, June 19th, half past 8 o'clock, A. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Absent, Walkinshaw, J. Wallace, Beattie, and J. Steele. Minutes read. Papers were called for.

The Report of the Western Sub. Synod was presented and marked No. 11. Complaint of Wm. Caldwell was presented and marked No. 12. Appeal of Wm. Caldwell was presented and marked No. 13. Report of Eastern Sub. Synod was presented and marked No. 14. J. Steele, Walkinshaw, Beattie, and J. Wallace appeared in court.

No. 11 was read and referred to the Committee on Synodical Reports. It is as follows:

To the general Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church, now holding its sessions in Allegheny—

The Western Subordinate Synod would respectfully report.

This Synod consists of four Presbyteries, one new presbytery having been decreed, including Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, &c. indefinitely to the west. A great many congregations are starting into visible existence in these new settlements to which the tide of emigration sets in with such unusual strength and rapidity. The reports from these regions are very cheering, and it really seems as if that desolate wilderness will very soon become a very fruitful field. God grant that it may not only blossom as the rose, but also send forth roots like Lebanon, and bear fruit like the Eden of the Lord. It is also pleasing to behold a number of enterprising and able labourers wending their way westward, in answer to the Macedonian cry. It is our earnest prayer that the Breaker up of the way may graciously display his banner and vouchsafe his presence in directing the marches and encampments of his Israel, until the ransomed tribes shall take possession, in Messiah's name, of the ends of our western earth. We have great reason to be thankful, that we enjoy a great measure of peace and harmony in our interchange of sentiment in our judicative deliberations and in other intercourse which we have in the fellowship of the gospel.

The correspondence which some time since you recommended us to open with the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery, has resulted in the accession of Rev. Wm. Neill, of that body, to this court.

For this we desire to be thankful, not only because it furnishes means to supply to a greater extent our vacancies, but also, because it strengthens our hope, that the time is near at hand when a great company of priests will be obedient to the faith.

All the ministers and the people appear to understand the distinctive principles of our testimony. They cheerfully resign all their rights to a participation in political emolument and power, that they may consistently and practically vindicate the crown rights and supreme prerogatives of Messiah the Prince. On the subject of voluntary associations, there is some variety of opinion. All are however, we hope, disposed to

exert their influence in promoting the extension of Christ's visible kingdom, and opposing the prevailing sins of the age and land in which we live. All of us desire to herald the proclamation of liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

Measures are in train which we have no doubt will result in the settlement of pastors over several of our vacant congregations. Our unsettled ministers are Rev. Wm. Sloan, Rev. Jas. Milligan, Rev. Samuel M'Kinney, Rev. Robert Lusk, and Rev. Wm. Neill. Our candidates are John Holmes, Jas. Wallace, Robert Hutchinson, and Hugh Stevenson. Our students are Johnson J. M'Clurken, John French, Samuel O. Wylie, John Gilbraith, and Wm. Slater.

We have no reference nor appeal calling for any judicial action of this court.

H. WALKINSHAW, *Moderator*.

Nos. 12 and 13 relating to the same matter, were read in connection and, on motion, laid on the table for the present.

No. 14 was read and referred to the committee on Synodical Reports. It is as follows :

To the Moderator and other members of the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church to meet in Alleghenytown, on the 16th June, 1840.

The Eastern Subordinate Synod respectfully present the following report of their state and proceedings since the time of their last report.

The Synod is composed of *ten* ministers, all of whom are settled. Of these, *three* form the Western Presbytery, and *seven* the Southern Presbytery.

The Northern Presbytery, formerly under our care, became disorganized by losing the time of its adjournment, and as one of the two ministers forming that Presbytery accepted a call at our last meeting, which caused his removal from our bounds, the remaining minister of said former Presbytery, with all the congregations within its bounds, was attached, until further order should be taken in the case, to the Southern Presbytery. The minister so remaining is the Rev. James Milligan, to whom a call by the New Alexandria congregation, in the bounds of the Western Sub. Synod, sustained by the Pittsburgh presbytery, forwarded by them to the Northern presbytery, and by them referred to synod, was presented. On his acceptance of said call, a certificate and dismission were, at his request, furnished him to the Pittsburgh presbytery. The aged and venerable Rev. Wm. Gibson was removed from the church militant, and from the number of our members, by death, on the 15th October, 1838, soon after the date of our last report. He died in the 86th year of his age, in the full hope of a glorious resurrection through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whose service he had long been employed, and of whose cause and testimony he was never ashamed. Mr. Andrew Stevenson was ordained to the office of the holy ministry, and installed as pastor of the 2d Reformed presbyterian congregation in New-York, by the Southern presbytery, on the 14th Nov. 1839. Thus, while our number became diminished

by the death of one and the removal of another of the ministers of this synod, it has pleased the Church's glorious Head to add one to the number remanent. In our last report, it was stated that some troubles existed in one of the congregations under the care of the Northern presbytery, and that synod had taken measures which, it was hoped, would be effectual in removing them. Of these measures the chief was the appointment of a Commission to visit the congregation, and endeavor to settle the difficulties. At our last meeting the commission laid before synod a full report of their proceedings, which were approved, and such action taken in the case as the circumstances seemed to call for. We regret to state that this report exhibited an exceedingly unpleasant state of affairs, which involved and implicated, to a considerable extent, the character of the pastor, Rev. Jas. Milligan. We are happy however in stating, that upon investigation of the case, during which he admitted sinfulness of conduct on his part, it was brought to a happy issue, so far as he was concerned. He submitted to the decision of the synod, adjudging him to receive, as the censure due and called for in his case, an Admonition. This was, upon the profession of his sorrow, by Mr. Milligan, and promise of amendment, administered by the Moderator, and Mr. Milligan restored to regular standing. In some measure good has resulted to the congregation also from the judicial action taken in the whole matters, though there is still a lack of harmony in that part of our Zion. With the exception of the matters just referred to, no case of Discipline has come before synod since the date of our last report. There are under our care *five* congregations ripe for the settlement of pastors, with three smaller ones, and numerous societies, all of which look with becoming earnestness and zeal to the presbyteries to which they respectively belong for a supply of gospel ordinances. We state with solicitude, that the presbyteries report themselves as unable to furnish any thing like an adequate amount of supplies, in answer to the Macedonian cry, which comes up to them regularly at their times of meeting. This you will readily perceive to be the case, when we state, that there is neither an unsettled minister, nor a licentiate, under the care of our presbyteries; and that the congregations and societies seeking for, and needing aid, are in some cases, far separated from each other, and lie at considerable, some of them great, distances from the pastors of congregations who have to be appointed to furnish them with such supplies as can be granted. We hope and earnestly entreat that you will take the condition of the vacant congregations and societies within our bounds into your serious and compassionate consideration, when distributing the ministerial and other aid at your disposal, and assign such a share to the presbyteries composing this synod, as may be an equal apportionment to them with the other parts of our Zion under your jurisdiction.

The Southern Presbytery reports, as under its care, three students of theology, two of whom, Messrs. J. W. Shaw and James Niell, have been admitted since our last report. We have reason to record with gratitude to the church's Head, that the settled congregations within our

bounds are generally increasing in the number of their members, and that the people, both in these and in the vacant congregations and societies, give punctual attendance upon the ordinances of grace as they have access to them. We have reason to believe that there is a dutiful observance of the Divine Rule "Cease my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge."

In the state of society around us there is much to deplore—much to demonstrate the propriety and duty of the Witnesses of the Lord Jesus, dwelling alone, not being reckoned with the sinful nation in the midst of which we dwell. Error in many forms is evidently and alarmingly on the increase; will-worship, particularly in the use of human psalmody and instrumental music, abounds; discipline is greatly neglected by most of the denominations of professed Christians; and few are found who sigh and cry for these abominations.

Our encouragement is, the Lord Jesus reigns, and will stay or control and overrule all things, so as to advance the Divine glory and promote the good of the church which is his Body, and to which he has been made Head over all things.

That the Witnesses may abide by the rule of the church's attainments, being enabled to walk by the same rule, and mind the same things, let us pray: and while we pray, let us thank God for the great things which he has done for our Zion, and take courage.

Respectfully submitted, by order of E. S. Synod.

(Attest.)

M. RONEY, *Synod's Clerk.*

Rev. J. Milligan presented a paper, No. 15, which, by permission, he read, when, on motion, it was referred to the Committee on the Signs of the Times.

A paper from J. Ritchie, asking advice, was presented and marked No. 16.

Report of the Pittsburgh Presbytery, on the "overture" on Church Government, was presented and marked No. 17.

No. 16 was read and, on motion, referred to the Committee on Discipline.

A petition from Mary King was presented and marked No. 18.

No. 17 was read and, on motion, laid on the table for the present.

A protest and appeal of Wm. Brown against a decision of the Southern Presbytery was presented and, with accompanying documents, marked No. 19.

A complaint and petition of David Peoples was presented and marked No. 20.

No. 18 was taken up, and being read in part, was disposed of as follows: On motion resolved, that the petition be returned, and the petitioner instructed to apply to the infe-

rior courts, viz. the session of the 2nd congregation, New-York, the Southern Presbytery, &c.

On motion No. 19 was laid on the table for the present.

No. 20 was read and disposed of as No. 18.

Reasons of protest and appeal, by John Cochrane, from a decision of the Southern Presbytery, were presented, marked No. 21, read and, on motion, laid on the table for the present.

A protest and appeal of Isaac Donaldson, from a decision of the Southern Presbytery, were presented, marked No. 22, read and, on motion, laid on the table for the present.

Reasons of protest and appeal, by John Hunter, from a decision of the Southern Presbytery, were presented, marked No. 23, read and, on motion, laid on the table for the present.

A petition from some members of the Philadelphia congregation, asking a disjunction from said congregation and a commission of General Synod, was presented, marked No. 24, read and ordered to be returned.

A complaint of Joseph Keys was presented and marked No. 25. On motion the paper was returned.

A complaint and petition of James Hooks, against the Southern Presbytery, was presented, marked No. 26, read and disposed of as follows: On motion resolved, that the complainant have leave to withdraw the paper, with instruction to submit to the session of the 2nd Reformed Presbyterian congregation, New-York; and that said session is hereby directed to give the complainant extracts of their proceedings in his case, with a transference thereof to the session of the 1st congregation, New-York.

Adjourned by prayer.

Same place, June 20, half past 8 o'clock, A. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Members all present. Minutes read. Papers were called for.

A letter from Dr. Pressly, of the Associate Reformed Church, in behalf of a "Convention of Reformed Churches," was presented, marked No. 27, read and referred to a special committee of two Ministers and three Ruling Elders.—D. Steele and M. Roney, Ministers, with J. Jamison, T. Gemmil and J. Beattie, Ruling Elders, are that committee.

A letter from D. Chrystie in relation to a "Calvinistic Family Library," was presented, marked No. 28, read and, on motion, referred to the Committee on the Theological Seminaries.

The Committee on the Signs of the Times reported in part. On motion the Report was accepted and laid on the table for the present.

On motion the following resolution was adopted: "Resolved, that the Committee on Foreign Correspondence be instructed to enquire into the subject of our relations to the Reformed Presbyterian Synods of Ireland and Scotland."

On motion resolved, that the hearing of the Reports of the Boards of Superintendants of the Theological Seminaries be the order of the day for Monday morning.

On motion Nos. 2 and 3 were taken up, when, on motion, they were referred to a special committee of two Ministers and three Ruling Elders. J. Crozier and T. Sproull, Ministers, with T. Gemmil, W. Cowan and J. Slater, Ruling Elders, are that committee.

On motion the standing rule for adjournment and meeting during the present sessions was suspended for this afternoon and Monday morning.

Adjourned by prayer, to meet same place on Monday at 10 o'clock, A. M.

Same place, 22nd June, 10 o'clock, A. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Absent, Blackwood, Walkinshaw, on leave, James Love, John Love, Dougherty, Slater, Johnston and McFarland. Minutes read. Johnston appeared. The order of the day, viz. hearing the Reports of Boards of Superintendants was called for. The report of Board of Superintendants of the Western Theological Seminary was presented, and, on motion, accepted and referred to the Committee on the Theological Seminaries. McFarland, Walkinshaw and Dougherty appeared.

The Report of the Board of Superintendants of the Eastern Theological Seminary was presented, and, on motion, accepted and referred to the Committee on Theological Seminaries.

The special committee on papers Nos. 2 and 3 reported. On motion the report was accepted and adopted, as follows:

The Committee on papers Nos. 2 and 3, respectfully report.

The following is the 8th section of the Directory for Family Worship.

"On the Lord's Day, after every one of the family apart, and the whole family together have sought the Lord (in whose hands the preparation of men's hearts is,) to fit them for the public worship and to bless to them the public worship, that he and they may join with the rest of the congregation: and the public worship being finished, after prayer,

he should take an account of what they have heard : and thereafter, to spend the rest of the time which they may spare in catechising, and in spiritual conferences upon the word of God : or else (going apart) they ought to apply themselves to reading, meditation, and secret prayer, that they may increase and confirm their communion with God : that so the profit which they found in the public ordinances may be cherished and promoted, and they more edified unto eternal life."

This direction, we believe, is sufficiently explicit. By it all the families under your care are bound. It is the duty of sessions not only to see that heads of families carefully observe this direction ; but also, according to their vocations, to train up the youth of the church, instructing them in the first principles of the oracles of God. Believing that the session of the first congregation of New-York are fully competent to make a fair application of the above direction, your committee have nothing farther to recommend on the subject.

JOHN CROZIER, *Chairman.*

The special committee on the letter from Dr. Pressly with accompanying documents reported. On motion the report was accepted and laid on the table for the present. Blackwood, James Love and John Love appeared.

On motion, resolved, that the vote by which paper No. 24 was returned, be reconsidered in so far as respects the petition for the appointment of a commission of this court. Resolved that paper No. 24 be laid on the table for the present.

The report of the special committee on the letter from Dr. Pressly was taken up for consideration, and on motion was considered paragraph by paragraph. The several paragraphs with amendments were adopted, and the whole report as amended was adopted as follows :

The Committee to whom were referred the letter signed John T. Pressly and the documents accompanying, respectfully report.

The communication is respectful, and the object proposed must be viewed as laudable, and exceedingly desirable by every member of the mystical body of Christ. The unity of the visible church we are under the highest obligation to preserve ; and when, through the sins and infirmities of her members, schisms obtain in the body, the same supreme authority requires that the causes be searched out and the prescribed remedy applied. Proceeding in this order there is encouragement held forth in the promise.

Error is a "work of the flesh," as truly as immorality exhibited in the outward conduct and must be considered as sinful in the sight of the God of truth. It is a truth taught in the word of God, and manifested in his providence, that societies, no less than individuals, when an evil is felt, are more solicitous for its removal, than to ascertain its causes and its nature. Your committee are of opinion, that this constitutional principle of our fallen nature is quite legible in the Conventional

proceedings referred to. Communion in order to union appears to be an inverting of the natural and scriptural order.

The following preamble and resolutions are recommended for your adoption.

Whereas most of the schisms that exist among the denominations popularly styled orthodox have originated in a departure by some from Reformation attainments ; and

Whereas there is no disposition manifested on the part of those who have declined from the doctrines and order of a covenanted Reformation, to retrace their steps ; but the contrary ; and

Whereas a motion being carried by the Convention, to which delegates from this Synod are invited, to strike out of certain articles of agreement the doctrine of the power of the civil magistrate as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, furnishes additional and lamentable evidence of growing hostility to a very prominent feature in the aforesaid Reformation : and

Whereas this Synod will not do any act that might be construed as implying an abandonment of any part of our terms of communion ; therefore,

1st. Resolved, That this Synod, while it recognizes the object of the Convention as legitimate, must view the means as unwarrantable.

2nd. Resolved, That we cannot in faithfulness comply with the invitation.

D. STEELE, Chairman.

On motion paper No. 17 was taken up. A motion was made for its adoption. While the motion was pending, Synod adjourned by prayer.

Same place, June 23d, 9 o'clock, A. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Absent, Walkinshaw. Minutes read.

On motion resolved, that consultative members receive their proportion of the fund for travelling expenses.

The committee on Theological Seminaries reported. The report was accepted and laid on the table for the present.—Walkinshaw appeared.

The committee on Finance reported ; the report was accepted, and on motion recommitted for correction so as to include consultative members contemplated in a former resolution.

On motion the Pittsburgh Presbytery had leave to withdraw paper No. 17 for correction.

The following preamble and resolution relating to the power of the Deacon was offered by Rev. J. Crozier.

“Whereas, the standards of this church exhibit the Deacon as an officer of divine institution, distinct from the Minister and Ruling Elder ; and

Whereas the extent of his jurisdiction is not so clearly pointed out in said standards, therefore

Resolved, that the exercise of the Deacon's office extends to all the temporalities of the church."

During the discussion of this resolution, it was resolved that the rule fixing the times of adjournment and meeting be suspended during the remaining sessions of Synod.

Adjourned with prayer, to meet same place, at 4 o'clock, P. M.

Same place, 4 o'clock, P. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Absent, Henry and J. Steele. Minutes read.

The court resumed the discussion of the resolution under consideration at the time of adjournment. J. Steele and Henry appeared.

After discussion had at length on the resolution, it was negatived.

The *Ayes* and *Noes* were called for.

Ayes—J. R. Willson, D. Scott, Roney, J. M. Willson, Stevenson, Cowan, Beaty, J. Z. Willson, Milligan, Jamison, 10.

Noes—Sproull, Blackwood, Walkinshaw, Crozier, James Love, Gemmil, Dougherty, John Love, Henry, Slater, R. Wallace, J. Wallace, D. Steele, McKinley, Wylie, Johnston, McFarland, J. Steele, R. Scott, Adams, 20.

From this decision, J. R. Willson, J. M. Willson, A. Stevenson, J. Jamison, W. Cowan, J. Z. Willson, dissented for reasons given in, and asked time to reduce them to writing. J. Milligan also dissented for reasons given in, and asked time to write them. J. M. Willson and J. Z. Willson, adhered to J. Milligan's reasons.

Adjourned by prayer, to meet same place to-morrow at 9 o'clock, A. M.

Same place, June 24, 9 o'clock, A. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Members all present. Minutes read.

The Committee on Finance reported, and, on motion, the Report was accepted and adopted, as follows:

The committee on Finance beg leave to report.

Your committee have examined the Synodical Treasurer's Report and find it correct—and there are remaining in the treasury \$242 71½.

In examining the report in relation to the fund of the Eastern Theological Seminary, we find that \$180 72 have been received, and the same paid over to Dr. Jas. R. Willson, Professor.

Your committee have received for defraying travelling expenses of ministers and ruling elders to this synod, from the congregations of

Brookland and Union,	\$20 00	Newburgh,	22 12
2d cong. New-York,	40 00	Miami,	8 50
Albany,	4 60	Philadelphia,	27 00
Camp Run, Slippery rock, &c.	10 00	Greensburg,	10 25
Monongahela & Miller's Run,	28 68	Muskingum,	5 00
Utica, O.	8 00	Coldenham,	17 00
Salt Creek,	10 00	New Alexandria,	12 00
Pittsburgh,	25 00	Bloomington,	5 00
Brush Creek,	4 91	Bethel, Ill.	10 00
1st cong. New-York,	20 00	Rochester,	16 00
Blacklegs,	2 00		

Total \$306 06.

Number of miles 3820—Mileage $5\frac{1}{2}$ cents nearly, per mile.

The following congregations sent no contributions to the fund for travelling expenses.

Elkhorn,	Kortright and Bovina,
Southfield,	Argyle,
Walnut,	Craftsbury,
White Lake,	York,
Ryegate,	Bloomfield,
Barnett,	Beachwoods,
Sterling,	Greenfield and Londonderry,
Old Bethel,	Conogocheague,
Xenia,	Topsham,
Baltimore,	

A. M'FARLAND, *Chairman.*

Resolved, that the Clerk of Synod be instructed to write a letter to each of the congregations in arrearage, requesting them to contribute regularly in time to come, their proportion to the travelling fund.

On motion, members were enquired at in relation to the injunction of General Synod requiring contributions from congregations to liquidate a debt of \$200 due Dr. Willson. The answers were satisfactory in part only, as will be seen by reference to the Treasurer's report.

On motion, paper No. 7, a protest and appeal by James McKinney, was taken up. At the request of the appellant, the consideration of the paper was postponed for the present.

On motion, paper No. 10, a protest and appeal by D. Kenan was taken up. The appellant was heard. The E. S. Synod replied. The appellant made a rejoinder. It was then on motion resolved, that the appeal be not sustained.

Adjourned by prayer, to meet same place at half past 2 o'clock, P. M.

Same place, half past 2 o'clock, P. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Members all present. Minutes read.

Rev. D. Steele presented a preamble and resolutions in relation to Voluntary Associations, which was marked No. 30, and on motion laid on the table till after the reception of the report of the committee on the Signs of the Times on that subject.

Moved and seconded that Item 2 of the unfinished business, referring to the "overture on Church Government" be taken up. The motion was negatived. Against this decision Dr. Willson asked leave to enter his dissent for reasons given in, asking time to write them.

On motion, papers Nos. 12 and 13 were taken up in connection, they containing a complaint, and a protest and appeal by William Caldwell against a decision of the Southern Presbytery. On motion, No. 13, containing the protest and appeal was ordered to be returned.

On motion, No. 12, containing the complaint was referred to a special committee. T. Sproull, J. Wallace, Ministers, with J. Love, Ruling Elder, are that committee.

Dr. Willson tabled the following reasons of dissent from the decision of Synod in not taking up for present consideration Item 2, of unfinished business:

Reasons of dissent from the vote refusing to take up the overture on Church Government.

1. Because the overture, our most important business, has been postponed for business of less importance.

2. The usual order has been violated in passing by unfinished business, without any good reason.

3. An important document, greatly needed by the church and for which she is looking with earnest expectation, is treated with neglect, and our people disappointed in what they had a right to expect.

4. It places this Synod in a false position before the public. The public will infer from the rejection of two motions on the subject of the deacon, that the majority of this Court are altogether adverse to the whole doctrine of our standards in relation to the office of deacon, whereas the majority have all affirmed, in the discussions, that they approve the office as a divine institution; the only difference of opinion is respecting the importance of the office and the extent of his power.

5. The refusal to enter on the discussion of the overture is calculated to weaken the confidence of the members of the church in this judicatory. They will say, when we contribute toward the bearing of the expenses of members of synod, and allow our pulpits to be so long vacant, we expect our ministers to attend to the most important busi-

ness. Now, as no business of which we know, is so important as the overture on church government, giving it the go by seems to indicate that there are some provisions in that document which the majority are afraid to discuss.

JAMES R. WILLSON.

Resolved, that when Synod finally adjourn, it shall be to meet in Utica, Ohio.

Adjourned by prayer to meet same place to-morrow, at 9 o'clock, A. M.

Same place, 25th June, 9 o'clock, A. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Members all present. Minutes read.

Reasons of dissent, by Dr. Willson and others, from a decision of this court relating to the extent of the power of the deacon were tabled, as follows :

1. The refusal to commit the temporalities of the church into the hands of deacons, is contrary to the law of the Lord ; who ordered all the ecclesiastical goods to be committed to the care of the Levites under the Old Testament ; and under the New, the business of administering all the finances of the church, was committed to deacons ordained for the purpose.

2. It is an entire abandonment of the footsteps of the flock, in relation to this part of the government of the Lord's house. In the Apostolic age, and onward to the rise of Antichrist, the church of Christ had deacons in all her fully organized congregations. In the glorious reformation from popery, commencing in the sixteenth century, our reforming ancestors had deacons in their congregations in Geneva, in Holland, in France, and in Scotland, from the time of John Knox until the Judicatories of the church were broken down by the persecution. In all these, not only the funds appropriated to the poor, but the temporalities of the church generally, were administered by the deacons.

3. It is a declension from the attainments of our covenant fathers. It was admitted by some in the argument, and not denied by any, that the acts of the general Assembly of the Church of Scotland between the years 1638-1649, establishing the reformation, did commit the temporalities of the church entirely to deacons ; and that in the second book of Discipline, this is said to have been done agreeably to the constitution of the Apostolical Kirk. None even attempted to prove in the argument that these acts have ever been repealed or altered, but it was denied that they are obligatory, at least so far as this subject is concerned. Attempts were made to show, that we have no very direct connexion with the acts of the Church of Scotland, as obligatory upon us. This argument, and without it the vote of the majority cannot be sustained, is entirely at variance with the rule of duty prescribed by the Head of the church : " Whereunto ye have already attained, walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing." It is substantially the same.

argument that was used in the New Light controversy on the jury act. The New Lights said, "there is nothing binding on the church but what is contained in the standards. The jury act, is in the Narrative of the Testimony, and is not a term of communion." This declension from the attainments of our covenant fathers, is an open, and avowed departure from the express statute laws of the Church of Scotland—a breaking down the carved work of the sanctuary.

4. The vote of the majority rejecting this resolution, was contrary to our most solemn *covenant* obligations. 2nd Book of Discipline, chap. ix. In the Apostolical Kirk, the deacons were appointed to collect and distribute what sum soever was collected of the faithful, to distribute unto the necessity of the saints, so that none lacked among the faithful.

These collections were not only of that which was collected in manner of alms, as some suppose, but of other goods moveable and immoveable—of lands and possessions, the price whereof was brought to the feet of the Apostles. Chap. viii. "Their office and power," (the deacon,) "is to receive and distribute the whole ecclesiastical goods unto them to whom they are appointed." This Book of Discipline is thus entitled, "The Second Book of Discipline, or Heads and Conclusions of the Policy of the Kirk, agreed upon in the General Assembly of 1578, inserted in the registers of Assembly, 1581: Sworn to in the National Covenant: revived and ratified by the Assembly, 1638, and by many other acts of Assembly, and according to which the church government is established by law, Anno 1592, and 1640." It is not even pretended that the Church of Scotland ever altered either her doctrine or practice on the subject of the deacon's office and power. Hence, if we are bound by that covenant, (and what Covenanter doubts it?) then we are bound to maintain that the deacon is as truly a perpetual officer in the church as the minister, and ruling elder. We are *not only* bound so to believe, but so to practice, according to the noble example set us by our reforming and martyred fathers in relation to this part of the order of the Lord's house, ordained by her blessed Head.

On all these accounts, we do dissent from the vote rejecting the said preamble and resolution, and refer the whole to the Great and Good Head, in full hope and confidence that He will in his own good time set right this great wrong.

JAMES R. WILLSON,	JOHN JAMISON,
JAMES M. WILLSON,	WILLIAM COWEN, jr.
ANDREW STEVENSON,	JOHN Z. WILLSON.

On motion, a committee was appointed to answer reasons of dissent by Dr. Willson and others. J. B. Johnston, J. Crozier, ministers, with S. Henry, ruling elder, are that committee. D. Steele was added, on motion.

Reasons of dissent by J. Milligan and others, from the same decision, were also tabled as follows:

1. It was retrograde and not forward in the whole action and argument on the case. We ought to advance towards finishing the testimony and perfecting the organization of the church. The control of all church property had never before been denied to the Deacons, the officers which are admitted to be of divine institution. "Bind up the testimony" &c.

2. We are not told who has the supervision of church property: If Deacons have not the oversight, who has?

3. The vote either admits that they may exercise their authority over some or none; if the latter, then why appoint an officer with no business—a sinecure? If the former, then this vote does not tell us what comes under his cognizance, and what does not.

4. The whole aspect of this vote looks like "*a go by*," and if so then it will be owning the existence of a Deacon as a distinct and permanent officer, and yet we shall have none, or give him nothing to do.

5. The action of this court seems to impugn, or at least is hard to reconcile with, the third article of our terms of communion.

JAMES MILLIGAN.

These reasons of dissent were on motion referred to the committee on reasons of dissent by Dr. Willson and others, to be by that committee answered.

The committee on the Signs of the Times reported in part, viz: on paper No. 6, relating to "voluntary associations." On motion, the report was accepted, and for the present, laid on the table.

On motion, paper No. 30, presented by Rev. D. Steele, containing preamble and resolutions in relation to voluntary associations, was taken up. On motion the consideration of this paper, with that of the report in part of the committee on the Signs of the Times in relation to voluntary associations, was postponed till the next meeting of synod, with a view to early attention at said meeting.

On motion, No. 19, with accompanying documents, containing protest and appeal of William Brown, was taken up. D. A. Grier of Pittsburgh, was, on motion, permitted to prosecute the appeal, the appellant being absent. Mr. Grier was heard in defence of the appeal: the presbytery was heard in part, when, on motion, the court adjourned by prayer to meet, same place, at half past 3 o'clock, P. M.

Same place, half past 3 o'clock, P. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Absent J. Steele. Minutes read.

The committee on Synodical Reports reported. The report was accepted, and on motion adopted as follows :

The committee on Synodical Reports, would respectfully report :— In the documents presented for our consideration, there is much that is interesting and encouraging. The cords of the church are rapidly lengthening ; an invisible hand has scattered the seed of reformation principles over our western territories, which has already vegetated, and given promise of an abundant harvest. From the report of the E. S. Synod, it appears that there are pressing calls in that part of the church for the administration of ordinances. Five congregations are reported as ripe for settlement, besides other vacancies ; and neither unsettled minister nor probationer under the care of Synod. A proportionate distribution of your available means of supplying these portions of the church should be made. It is gratifying to hear, that the affairs of the church within the bounds of the late Northern Presbytery, are in a measure settled. The E. S. Synod consists of but two Presbyteries, the Northern Presbytery having become extinct by the removal of one of the only two constituent members.

There are four Presbyteries now within the bounds of the W. S. Synod. There are prospects of several settlements in the west. We recommend that Mr. Hutcheson and Mr. John Holmes, probationers, be transferred to the bounds of the E. S. Synod. The other ministers and probationers to remain in the west. The petition from Lisbon, we would recommend to the attention of the E. S. Synod.

On the subject of the Delegation Synod and Subordinate Synods, your committee recommend the adoption of the following preamble and resolution.

Whereas the system of Subordinate Synods, and a Delegated Synod is, in the present circumstances of the church, complex and unnecessary, Therefore,

Resolved, that the Sub. Synods be directed to adjourn *sine die*, at the close of their next sessions, and that the delegation system be abolished after the present sessions of General Synod, and the Synod be constituted as it was previously to the year 1825.

J. BLACKWOOD, *Chairman*.

Resolved, that the synod shall finally adjourn its present sessions to-morrow, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

The Southern presbytery was heard farther on the appeal of Wm. Brown. Mr. Greer was heard in rejoinder.

On motion, the appeal was sustained, and the decision of the Southern presbytery reversed.

On motion the following preamble and resolution were adopted, "Whereas the cases of John Hunter, Isaac Donaldson, and John Cochrane appear, by the admission of the Southern Presbytery, to stand in the same situation with that of Wm. Brown just issued—therefore resolved, that the de-

cisions of the Southern presbytery in their cases be reversed. On motion, the court took a recess for one hour.

The time of recess having expired, synod came to order. On motion, No. 24, containing a petition for a commission of synod, by members of the Philadelphia congregation, was taken up. The prayer of the petitioners was granted, and a commission appointed. T. Sproull and J. Crozier, ministers, with J. Dougherty, ruling elder, are that commission.— On motion, No. 7, the appeal of James M'Kinney, was taken up. The appellant was heard. The presbytery was heard. The appellant made a rejoinder. On motion, the appeal was not sustained.

The following preamble and resolutions were adopted.

Whereas the supervision of Presbyteries, in presbyterial visitation, has been found profitable for the stirring up of both ministers and people to the performance of duty ; and,

Whereas the relaxation of the discipline of the Protestant Churches, has led to an alarming declension of both orthodoxy and piety ; and,

Whereas it is imperative on us, to employ all the means which God has instituted to preserve our congregations from similar declension—therefore,

1. Resolved, that it be enjoined on all the Presbyteries under the jurisdiction of this Synod, to perform a presbyterial visitation once every year, or as often as practicable, in all their congregations, by at least one minister and one ruling elder.

2. Resolved, that the following questions shall be asked, in the presence of the congregation assembled in the church, by one week's previous notice.

I. To the pastor. 1. Do you perform visitations once a year, in every family or society in your charge ?

2. Do you catechize, in diets of catechizing, parents and the children, on both doctrine and practice ?

3. Do you expound in your ministry, on each Sabbath morning, a portion of the book of Psalms, before it is sung by the congregation ?

4. Do you expound by way of lecture, each Sabbath forenoon, a portion of the scriptures, and preach a sermon in the afternoon ?

II. To the Elders. 1. Do you, in the admission of members, ask every applicant, whether he or she has read, or heard read the whole of all the documents that form our terms of communion ?

2. Do you endeavor to have satisfactory evidence, that all those who are admitted to the communion of the church, have read, or heard read and believe all those documents before their admission ?

3. Do you ask every applicant, whether he performs, morning and evening, the duties of family worship and secret prayer ?

4. Do you require of every one whom you admit to the communion of the church, to have attended a fellowship meeting ?

5. Is the ordinance of baptism dispensed in your congregation before both parents, or one of them have partaken of the Lord's supper?

6. Is the ordinance of marriage dispensed to parties in your congregation, or people not in the communion of the church, without having been published three several sabbaths, either in the church or in the fellowship meetings, and that in both congregations when the parties do not reside in the same congregation, they both being members?

7. Is any one belonging to any congregation in your neighborhood admitted to membership in your congregation, without a certificate from that congregation in which he has resided?

The committee appointed to answer reasons of dissent by J. R. Willson and others, reported. The report was accepted and adopted, as follows.

Answers to reasons of dissent by James R. Willson and others.

1st. In the first reason, the question is misrepresented. Synod does not deny, that by *divine right* the temporalities of the church are entrusted to the deacon; but that *all* the temporalities are so entrusted.

2. The second reason, so called, is also a misrepresentation of the question, as is manifest on inspecting the preamble to the resolution, which recognizes the office of deacon as of *divine right*; consequently, the second reason tends only to divert the mind from the point decided by Synod, and so make a false impression.

3. The third, so styled reason, is so far from matter of fact, that it is at first sight a *libel against the Court*, and cannot be entertained by the Synod.

4. The fourth "reason!" constitutes a *formal libel*, containing one count, charging the Court with a "violation of solemn covenant obligations,"—appending evidences, and closed with a sophistical argument calculated to deceive, and thereby subject Synod to a groundless suspicion, and therefore must be dismissed.

The reasons tabled by Mr. Milligan, when taken in connexion with the question, we do not deem of sufficient importance to require a reply. The point decided by Synod was, that *all* church property, such as meeting-houses, &c. is *not by divine right* put into the hand of the deacon.

J. B. JOHNSTON, *Chairman*.

Adjourned by prayer to meet same place to-morrow, at 6 o'clock, A. M.

Same place, June 26, 6 o'clock, A. M.

Synod met and was constituted with prayer. Absent James Love and Henry. Minutes read.

Resolved, that James M. Beattie, a student of the Eastern theological seminary, be appointed agent for this synod, to collect books and money in Europe for the use of the theological seminaries.

The committee on Discipline reported. The report was accepted, and, on motion for adoption, a motion to amend

the report was offered by the Rev. J. Milligan, granting the prayer of petitioners from Topsham, praying to have leave to continue their practice in continuous singing in the congregation. The motion was negatived. The mover, J. Milligan, asked leave to enter his dissent as follows :

I enter my dissent from the decision of this Court, in refusing to grant the petition of the Topsham Session, to reverse the declaratory act on Lining.

1st. Because it was not from the first pretended to be a divine institution.

2nd. The explanation of the declaratory act seems to me, to alter the whole foundation of the constitutional law of the Directory.

3d. It seems to me inconsistent with the principle that God has instituted, in his word, all the forms of acceptable worship. "In vain do they worship me, after the doctrine and commandments of men."

JAMES MILLIGAN.

The report of the committee on Discipline was then adopted as follows :

The committee on Discipline respectfully report, that only two papers, Nos. 9 and 16, have been referred to them.

Of these, the former is a petition from Ruling Elders of Topsham asking Synod to alter the declaratory act of last Synod relating to the reading of lines in public worship. As Synod by its decision in the case of appeal of Mr. D. Kenan has decided, that said declaratory act shall be considered as enjoining the sessions under our care to have the lines read in their respective congregations, your committee recommend that no further action be taken in the case.

The latter paper, No. 16, is a petition from J. Ritchie, of the Philadelphia congregation, asking advice. As a Commission has been appointed to visit said congregation, your committee recommend the reference of said paper to that commission.

Respectfully submitted.

M. RONEY, *Chairman.*

The following preamble and resolution were adopted. "Whereas no delegates have appeared in this synod from the Western presbytery of the E. S. synod, and no communication whatever, either verbal or otherwise on the subject, therefore,

Resolved, that this synod disapprove of the neglect of duty in this matter, on the part of said presbytery.

The committee on the Signs of the Times reported. The report was accepted, and ordered to be considered paragraph by paragraph. The paragraphs were adopted severally with amendments. The whole report was adopted as follows :

The committee on the Signs of the Times beg leave to report the following causes of Fasting and Thanksgiving.

CAUSES OF FASTING.

The condition of the church and of society calls loudly on all the disciples of Christ to put on sack-cloth and sit down in the ashes. "We, with our brethren and fathers, have sinned and done wickedly."

1. In that we have partaken largely of the worldly spirit of the times. Without a holy and habitual sense of the presence of a three one God, as our covenant Father, there can be no spirituality of mind. Since the fall of man, in his naturally corrupt state, the world, with its carnal gratifications, the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye and the pride of life, occupy his whole soul. "The Lord is not in all his thoughts." This spirit which pervades all human society without the church, has come into the church like a flood. Hence the eager pursuit of riches, the growing fondness for fashionable and expensive display. Most professors are more anxious to gratify themselves in worldly pomp, than to shew forth the honor and glory of God.

2. Ambition exercises its unholy influence among us.—There is a laudable emulation to excel in what is praiseworthy; instead of this, however, there is a strife who shall be the greatest in popular favor as preachers, and who shall gain most influence in the church. Self exaltation, instead of a seeking the glory of God, is manifest among the officers of the church and among the people. It is on this principle that so many are ready to give encouragement to every factious troubler of Israel. It is in the same spirit, that reports against the brethren are listened to, cherished and circulated. "Report say they and we will report it," in order to diminish the power and influence of others, that we ourselves may be exalted. We do not live in the spirit of the divine maxims "in honor preferring one another, and "let each esteem other bet-

ter than himself. We do not say, in the humble spirit of the Apostle to the Gentiles, "I am less than the least of all saints," "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Instead of washing the feet of the saints, after the example of our Lord, we pluck off their raiment and expose their nakedness.

3. Indolence in spiritual duties is not among the least of our sins. We are eager in the pursuit of property and pleasure, while, when called to engage in the duties of personal, household, social, and public devotions—to labor, or to suffer reproach for the testimony of Jesus, the wheels of the chariot drag heavily. On the bed of sloth, we say, "a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep." Light and secular reading pleases us, while the perusal and study of the word of God, for our personal improvement in holiness, or for the edification of others, are approached with indolence and tardiness. We employ little time in self-examination, meditation, and ejaculatory prayer; for our souls say, what are all these? When the Holy Spirit strives to stir us up—when Christ calls us to entertain him in our souls by these services, we reply, "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" O that the Beloved may not withdraw himself, and leave us to reap the bitter fruits of our indolence.

4. We have greatly sinned against the Lord our God, by indulging in angry passions. Our anger has not been a holy indignation against folly and sin; but, on the contrary, a feverish excitement on account of some real or imaginary imputation of our honor. Even in giving a reason for the hope that is in us, while defending the doctrines of our covenanted reformation against gainsayers, it is not done with meekness and fear. The argument for truth is maintained, rather for the pleasure and honor of gaining a victory over an adversary, and prostrating a foe, than for the glory of God, the love of truth, and the conviction and conversion of those

who are erring and out of the way. We fret and murmur at the dispensations of the Lord's providence, instead of exercising holy and humble resignation, possessing our souls in patience. We indulge in irregular emotions, and bursts of unsanctified passion; and to excuse this great sin, we vainly imagine, that the "wrath of man worketh the righteousness of God." The public mind over all Christendom is in a highly inflammable state; and we alas! have drunk deep into its turbulent spirit; so that our souls are like the troubled sea, whose waters cannot rest, but continually cast up mire and dirt.

5. There is a defect among us of an enlightened and noble attachment to the great body of the faithful, apart from local attachments and local partialities. People look little beyond their own households and congregations.

6. A factious and insubordinate spirit is extensively abroad in the church, seeking to work the disorganization of the social body in her government and order; and we have among us very little disposition to arrest this baleful spirit of evil; but too many are fond to cherish and foster it.

7. Evil surmisings, by which the very worst interpretation is often given to the actions of brethren. To so great an extent do these prevail, that among the professors of religion, there is very little mutual confidence. Outward professions of friendship are in many cases, not to be relied on. Brother is pleased to see the reputation of brother harmed; while few have an earnest desire for the edification of the body of Christ in love.

8. Our unbelief is the bitter root of all these, and many other sins that debase professors, and mar the beauty of the temple of the Lord.

While these sins abound so alarmingly in the church, society around is overflowed with an increasing deluge of all evil. Atheism, idolatry, profane swearing, sabbath violation, oppression by holding millions of unoffending men in bondage, under constitutional laws of the land, drunkenness,

the soul-destroying traffic in intoxicating drinks, murder, whoredom, theft, false witness bearing, and covetousness, are every where prevalent and increasing. The process of the destruction of society by all these evils is making rapid progress.

On all these, and other accounts, Synod appoints the 2d THURSDAY of February, 1841, as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to be observed by themselves and all the people under their charge.

CAUSES OF THANKSGIVING.

“The tender mercies of our God are over all his other works,” notwithstanding the prevalence of sin. He still sends rain and fruitful seasons, filling the hearts of men with food and gladness. The present season has been most propitious; and there are the most encouraging prospects that the labors of the husbandman will be abundantly rewarded. There are health, and peace, and plenty in all our borders. The appearances that threatened war with a great and powerful nation, no longer alarm the nation.

The arts of peace are in a highly encouraging condition. There is no class of society destitute of daily bread.

Efforts still continue to be made for the diffusion of the holy scriptures among the destitute at home, and among the people of all nations. The Gospel of the Son of God, in numerous correct versions of the scriptures, will soon be made known in all the dark places of the earth.

There are evident indications, in the religious and political state of Christendom, that the reign of Antichrist is near an end. The hail storm of the last vial of revelation begins to effuse its contents on the antichristian nations, and no human power can arrest its progress.

The efforts made for the emancipation of the millions of men, who are held in cruel bondage, though in many respects unwise and sinful, (such as *political action* under the present

deistical constitution of the United States, &c. &c.) yet show, that in the providence of the Mediator, who overrules and controls all things, the object of universal emancipation must be ere long accomplished.

We ourselves, though in great weakness, amidst many sore discouragements from without, and conflicts with the spiritualities of wickedness in high places, are, by the good hand of our God upon us, enabled to hold on in the maintenance of the truth; and we are making a little progress.

For these and other causes, Synod appoints the 2nd THURSDAY of November, 1840, as a day of thanksgiving, to be observed by themselves, and all the people under their care.

J. R. WILLSON, *Chairman.*

The Pittsburgh presbytery returned their report, No. 17, on the overture on church government, which was, on motion, laid on the table. It is as follows :

Report of Pittsburgh Presbytery on the form of government.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." In order to determine the seasonableness of any particular duty, it is necessary to be able to discern the signs of the times. It was of incalculable advantage to David, when the affairs of his kingdom were in an unsettled state, and doubtless many schemes of reformation projected, that he had "men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do."

Reason and observation are sufficient to teach us, that a time of lukewarmness, is an unsuitable time to attempt advances in reformation. Lifelessness, as it respects the spirituality of religion, is not unfrequently accompanied by much zeal for its forms. We read of some "who had a form of godliness, but denied the power thereof." Where attachment to truth, for its own sake, is not strong, and love to the brethren not ardent, there will be a tendency toward insubordination. While, however, the standards in which all have professed their belief, and to which they have pledged their adherence, remain entire, there is a general bond by which all are held together, and the visible unity of the church is preserved. Weaken this, and you endanger the peace of the church—take it away, and you throw her open to disorganization. Nor does it alter the case, that you honestly propose to furnish a better. Attachments to forms of long use in the church, render men exceedingly scrupulous in receiving any thing as substitutes for them.

That we live in an age of which the above description is characteristic, every close observer must admit. "Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold: a revolutionary spirit pervades every de-

partment of society. God is shaking both the heavens and the earth. The things that are made will be shaken and removed, while the kingdom which is received, cannot be removed, but will remain." The form of church government and directory for worship, prepared by the Assembly of divines at Westminster, and received by the Church of Scotland, yet remain, although the church since their reception, has been once and again shaken. Whatever degree of undue zeal for royalty, or blind attachment to hereditary succession characterized the second reformation, it was afterwards shaken out of the church by the hand of persecution. Throughout this time of trial, and the subsequent revolution, these venerable documents remained a constituent part of the church's standards. They have survived to the present time. We are the honored inheritors of this invaluable legacy, transmitted by our fathers, and sealed by the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. Would it not be desirable to hand them down to posterity as received by us, that they may descend into the Millennial Church, as standing monuments of God's care in times of trial—and that they may identify us who hold them, with the Church of Scotland, by which they were adopted, and serve as way-marks to point out the old paths to those who have wandered from them.

We do not contend that these parts of the church's order are incapable of amendment. But we do believe, that this is not the time for supplying whatever may be deemed defective. Special out-pouring of the Spirit of God is necessary to qualify for that work, and such a season of gracious influences it is humbling to know the church does not now enjoy. We appear to be in that state, when the command—"hold that fast which thou hast," is specially applicable.

In view of all these things, we recommend the following resolutions for the adoption of General Synod.

Resolved, 1. That the overture on church government be, and it hereby is declared to be no longer before the church for consideration, with a view to adoption by this court.

2. That the form of church government, bound up in the Confession of Faith, is the law of the church, to which all its members are solemnly pledged.

JAMES LOVE, *Pres. Clerk.*

The special committee on Wm. Caldwell's complaint reported. The report was accepted and, on motion, adopted as follows :

The committee on the complaint of Wm. Caldwell would report the following recommendation :

That the paper be referred to the Commission of this court, appointed to visit the Philadelphia congregation.

T. SPROULL, *Chairman.*

Resolved, that the Commission of this court appointed to visit the Philadelphia congregation, be directed to meet in

Cherry-street church, Philadelphia, on the Thursday after the *third* Sabbath of August next.

On motion Samuel Wylie was substituted for J. Dougherty on the Commission to Philadelphia.

Resolved, that all those who ask commissions from this and inferior judicatories are held bound for the expenses of commissioners attending.

The report of the committee on the Theological Seminaries was taken up. While the report was under consideration it was resolved, that the hour of final adjournment be changed from 10 o'clock A. M. to 12 o'clock at noon.

On motion Synod decreed the union of the Eastern and Western Theological Seminaries, under the joint care of both the present Professors; and that Allegheny, or its immediate vicinity, be the location of the Theological Seminary.

On motion Synod ordered that the sessions in the Seminary shall commence, each year, on the *first Tuesday of November*, and continue *five months*.

Resolved, that ministers present, and ruling elders from congregations not represented by pastors, pledge themselves, on behalf of their congregations severally, in an amount to be given annually for two years, for the support of the Theological Seminary. The following pledged:—

John Beattie,	\$50.00	R. Wallace,	\$60.00
M. Roney,	50.00	J. Wallace,	20.00
A. Stevenson,	60.00	J. B. Johnston,	20.00
T. Sproull,	75.00	A. McFarland,	40.00
H. Walkinshaw,	60.00	W. Cowan,	50.00
J. Crozier,	60.00	J. Steele, (Elkhorn,)	25.00
Jas. Love,	30.00		

Also, Mr. James Shaw, being present, pledged for N. Alexandria, \$25.00.

Resolved, that ministers, preachers, and ruling elders be requested to make exertions to obtain funds in aid of the Theological Seminary.

Mr. John Wallace, of Pittsburgh, was, on motion, appointed Treasurer of the Theological Seminary's fund.

On motion J. Blackwood, J. Crozier and H. Walkinshaw, ministers, with J. Dods and S. Wylie, were appointed a committee of inspection of the Theological Seminary.

Resolved, that \$600.00 shall be the annual salary of Dr. Willson for his services in the Theological Seminary.

Resolved, that the Treasurer of the Theological Seminary's fund be authorized to pay Dr. Willson the amount of his salary in quarterly payments in advance, commencing November 1st, 1840.

Resolved, that the Treasurer of the Theological Seminary's fund be authorized to pay Dr. Willson \$150.00, for expenses in removing his family to Allegheny.

Resolved, that the pastoral connection between Dr. Willson and the congregation of Coldenham be formally dissolved, and that this dissolution shall take effect on the 1st of October next.

On motion the farther consideration of the report of the committee on the Theological Seminaries was dismissed.

Resolved, that the clerk be instructed to collect the published Minutes of Synod, and have them bound at Synod's expense.

Resolved, that when Synod adjourn, it shall be to meet on the *first Wednesday* of October, 1841, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

The following preamble and resolution were laid on the table by J. Milligan, seconded by J. R. Willson.

Whereas trafficking in ardent spirits or intoxicating liquors for common drinks is literally holding the bottle to the face of a neighbour to excite a lustful appetite in our neighbour, which we ought to mortify in ourselves ; and whereas this subject has recently undergone such a thorough investigation among the sober and the pious of all other denominations, that all freedom in these things is now peculiarly scandalous ; therefore,

Resolved, that all such traffic be, and is hereby, prohibited in this church. Hab. ii. 15. "Wo unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him and makest him drunken, also that thou mayest look on their nakedness."

Resolved, that the next meeting of Synod be opened by a Sermon from Isa. xxi. 11, 12. and that Dr. Willson be the Moderator's alternate.

On motion, Synod adjourned with prayer and singing the 133d Psalm.

Attest.

DAVID SCOTT, *Moderator.*
J. B. JOHNSTON, *Clerk.*

Allegheny, 26th June, 1840.

Walter Bradford, Treas. in ac. with the Gen. Synod of the Ref. Pres. Church.

DR.

SYNODICAL EXPENSE FUND.

1838. Sept. 29.

To balance in treasury per last report,	\$197 44
To cash received from Rev. M. Roney for Testimony,	49 00
To do. do. do. Minutes of 1836,	3 60
To do. do. do. Extra Min. of 1838,	3 62½
	<hr/>
	\$253 66½

FUND FOR COLDENHAM THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

1838. Dec. 11.

*To cash from Newburgh cong. for Theo. Sem. at Coldenham,	\$15 00
*Do. do. Albany congregation for do. do.	13 50
Do. do. 2 cong. New, York, (per Rev. A. Stevenson,)	60 00
*Do. do. Coldenham cong. (per Dr. Willson,)	11 00
*Do. do. Pittsburgh presbytery, (per Rev. T. Sproull,)	44 37
Do. do. Philadelphia congregation,	26 85
Do. do. Rev. Jas. Milligan, (per Dr. Willson,)	5 00
Do. do. Mr. John Beattie, (per Dr. Willson,)	5 00
	<hr/>
	\$180 72

CR.

1840. June 5.

By cash for printing extra Minutes,	\$10 95
Balance in treasury,	242 71½
	<hr/>
	253 66½

1938. Dec. 11.

By cash paid Dr. Willson, Profes'r Theo. Sem. at Coldenham,	28 50
By do. do. do. do.	71 00
By do. do. do. do.	10 00
By do. do. do. do.	71 22
	<hr/>
	\$180 72

(Errors excepted.)

W. BRADFORD, *Treasurer.**Philadelphia, June 5, 1840.*

Those marked thus () were to liquidate the debt acknowledged by last Synod due to Dr. Willson.

THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

SEPTEMBER, 1840.

No. VII.

APPENDIX TO MINUTES OF SYNOD.

The consideration of the following Documents which, for the sake of distinction, we have numbered 1, 2, 3, was deferred till next meeting of Synod. It was understood that they should be published, not as a part of the Minutes, inasmuch as they had not been acted upon, but as an Appendix to the Minutes. We have placed them in the beginning of the No. that in binding, the Minutes and they may come together.
—ED.

No. 1. REPORT ON CIVIL RELATIONS.—Your committee on the Signs of the Times report in part, on the paper relative to our civil relations, submitted to Synod by the Rev. Mr. Milligan. The chief means by which the Spirit of the Lord of hosts has reformed the nations, is the diffusion of gospel truth. “I will preach thy word to kings,” has been sung for ages by the church. For many ages the kings of the earth have been in a state of open hostility to Messiah, our Prince. The word which the church in this part of her song of praise, promises to preach must, according to this vow, be preached to wicked rulers as public civil functionaries. In performing this duty, the church must use the same plainness and fidelity in declaring the whole counsel of God to the great men of the earth, that she does when addressing those who occupy humbler stations. They must “reprove, rebuke and exhort kings with all authority and long suffering.” This must be done, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear.

There are several ways in which this may be done, as,

1. By transmitting to them through the mail, those tracts which are composed expressly in relation to their duty as public functionaries. Some good may be done in this way, and your committee think it ought to be attempted by the ministers and members of the church.

2. By letters to the officers of state, stating frankly what are their duties, and the sins with which they are chargeable. This requires great wisdom and prudence. When ably, magnanimously and wisely conducted, this mode of preaching the word, as it appears to your committee, may be rendered very effective.

3. By conversation when the ministers of the gospel and other disciples are providentially thrown into their society in steamboats, rail road cars, and otherwise.

4. By the diffusion of gospel doctrine through the press, so extensively and in tones so loud, that the rulers of the nation will have the subject forced on their attention and be compelled to pause and listen. All that employ the press in the service of the sanctuary contribute to the preaching of the gospel to kings.

5. By the publication of formal addresses to the mass of the people and instructing them in the import of their civil duties. This would become a very efficient instrument in the hands of the church provided the friends of truth and moral order, could procure the insertion of these addresses in the public journals. The time must come, and your committee hope that it will soon arrive, when the church will employ extensively those vehicles of intelligence in asserting the claims of Emmanuel over all persons, relations and things. It is by those journals that the civilized world is now governed. In Great Britain, those topics that refer to the moral and religious duties of civil rulers are freely and largely discussed. Owing to the entire divorce of the government of the United States from the law of God, moral and religious discussions are very rarely issued from the political newspaper press. This however, is a state of things that cannot last long. Indeed, of late, even the most irreligious newspapers in the Atlantic cities publish an abstract of the proceedings of ecclesiastical bodies, and the doings of those benevolent associations for moral and charitable purposes, which form a remarkable feature in the aspect of the times. In this respect the habit of the British press exerts a powerful influence on the American journals. Were the

transactions of our judicatories spread before the public in this way, the cause of truth would soon become favorably known to the great body of the Protestant churches.

6. By petitioning civil rulers on special and interesting topics for the reforming of particular existing evils, or the promotion of some branch of national morality. The attempts which have been made by the people of the United States, in petitioning the state legislatures on the necessity of legislative interference for the suppression of intemperance ; and the general government for the sanctification of the Sabbath, and the abolition of slavery, have been eminently unsuccessful. But we ought not to infer from the want of success hitherto, that this mode of attempting a reformation of existing evils is either improper or profitless. The public mind, by these petitions and the discussions to which they have given rise has been leavened extensively with a knowledge of the high and holy claims of the Sabbath, and a righteous indignation against the national outrage on the rights of man, which the government commits in the holding of millions of unoffending men in cruel bondage. At the same time these petitions have borne a testimony against enormous evils, and they will exhibit on the page of history a justification of the righteous ways of God in past and coming judgments on the nation. Some doubts have arisen in the minds of good men on the subject of petitioning an immoral government. It has been doubted whether Covenanters, who refuse to recognize the immoral civil institutions as the ordinance of God, can consistently memorialize them on any topic. The best of the saints have a holy sensitiveness that preserves them from contamination by approximation to evils. This important part of the Christian character has been one great means of preserving the garments of God's witnesses unspotted from the world ; and it will probably prevent the great body of them from attempting much in this way until the time of the end. Our martyred fathers refused to petition their persecutors to spare their lives ; while they improved every opportunity of rebuking with dauntless magnanimity the crimes and cruelty of their oppressors. Their reason, however, seems to have been, that their petitions would have seemed to imply a right, on the part of the rulers, to take away their lives. This is very different from warnings or entreaties to depart from sin. Daniel and Nehemiah petitioned wicked kings for temporal comforts for themselves and their breth-

ren. Your committee cannot perceive how it is wrong for Covenanters now to do what those eminent saints did, and on account of which they offered thanksgiving to God for prospering them therein. These petitions were presented by Daniel and Nehemiah not as ecclesiastical deeds, but as the acts of private persons. For want of remembering this distinction the minds of many good men have been perplexed with doubts, and feared where no fear was. On the whole, this is one of those questions of casuistry which it would be injudicious for Synod to decide upon. Much on such topics must be left to christian prudence under the direction of that wisdom which cometh down from above, to guide the saints in the path of duty according to the circumstances in which the providence of God places them. One maxim, however, your committee think ought not to be called in question.—The church as such cannot petition civil rulers, whether moral or immoral, as inferiors do superiors. The relation which the supreme judicatory of the church, as a covenant society, sustains to the government of a commonwealth, is the same that a minister sustains to a civil ruler in his congregation. In all civil things the minister is subject to the civil magistrate, and in all ecclesiastical matters the civil officer must obey the spiritual functionary. The pastor does not, unless by a figure of speech, make supplication to his magistratical parishioner when he calls him to duty. If this is true in the relations of the church, when the civil ruler is God's magistrate, much more is it of force, when the government is in an attitude of hostility to Zion's king. Your committee, however, think that this judicatory may authoritatively call on the national functionaries and upon the nation through them to acknowledge Messiah the Prince of the kings of the earth, and to subject themselves to his written law by a covenant oath of allegiance. They, therefore recommend the adoption of the following preamble and resolutions.

Whereas the civil institutions of the United States do not profess to acknowledge the God of Israel, nor his laws, nor to recognize the rights of his church, and

Whereas very many of those who are, according to the constitution, intrusted by the suffrages of the people with the administration of the government, are immoral men, and

Whereas millions of unoffending men are, under the sanction of constitutional provisions, held in bondage, and

Whereas on all these accounts, the interests of religion, of common morality and the national weal, do greatly suffer ; and

Whereas the allegiance which we owe to our Lord and Master makes it an imperative duty to speak the word of the Lord to kings, to cry aloud and spare not, therefore, resolved,—

1. That this Synod will issue a warning against these evils, and a call to national subjection to Emmanuel.

2. That this warning and call shall be addressed to the President, Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, and to the governors and legislatures of all the States and territories of the Union.

3. That a committee of three ruling elders and two ministers shall be appointed to carry these resolutions into effect.

4. That the committee report to the next sessions of this judicatory all its proceedings under this act.

5. That the style of the committee shall be "A commission of the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church," and its communications to the public functionaries shall be signed by the Chairman and Secretary.

6. That it shall draw on the treasurer of Synod for the payment of the debts contracted in conducting its transactions.

NO. 2. REPORT ON VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS.—The committee on the Signs of the Times beg leave to report farther in part, on the paper referred to them respecting associations.

Man is endowed by his Maker with social powers ; and is prompted by the constitutional principles of his mind to enter into associations with those who partake of the same nature with himself. Had he not fallen, action according to this social principle could have led to good only. But since the fall of man, and the revelation of the first promise, that God would put enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, the woman's seed has been in danger from temptation to associate too intimately with the serpent's seed. "How can a man take fire in his bosom and not be burnt?" Association with corrupt governments and churches and the "unhallowed lodges of free masons, and entangling associations with ungodly men," by becoming incorporated with them, is imperatively forbidden by the law of

the church. The intermarriage of the members of the church with infidels or Papists is also prohibited.

Your committee do not remember that the connection with any other association is disallowed by any *direct law*. But there are other associations in relation to which we need caution.

The memorial referred to your committee mentions the Temperance and Anti-Slavery societies, as objects of inquiry. There are others that furnish interesting subjects of investigation. The associations for literary purposes, as common schools, academies, colleges, lyceums, and library societies ; the associations for business, as partnerships, joint stock, and insurance companies ; the associations for moral objects, as bible, tract and Sabbath sanctification societies ; and others for merely benevolent objects, as the orphan asylum, the seaman's friend, the foundling hospital, and dorcas societies. These are but a few of the very numerous associations that have sprung up in modern times.

In nearly all of them there is need of caution and vigilance, provided the disciples of Christ would keep their garments unspotted from the world. There are few in which the meetings on solemn occasions, designed to recommend them to public favor, do not sing human compositions as songs of praise to God. When it is known that this corruption of the worship of God is practised, Covenanters, as your committee think, cannot, consistently with their duty to God, enter into membership. There are others in which Papists and Heretics are notoriously prominent members. As marriage with all such is prohibited, your committee think that entering into associations with them for whatever objects, except such as are necessary in the course of business, ought to be avoided. Parents should, if possible, avoid sending their children to any school which is not taught by an orthodox and godly preceptor, who opens and closes the daily exercises with prayer.

In all cases where there is any thing immoral in the constitution of a society, or in its habitual and allowed actions, or where the means employed to effect good are not according to the unerring rule of right and wrong, or where the openly profane, gross idolators and heretics are allowed to enjoy all the immunities of the society, your committee think that all who incorporate with them become partakers of their sins.

As to the societies specified in the memorial, your committee do not perceive any thing in their constitutional provisions or actions *peculiar* to them which requires the special interposition of the government of the Lord's house. Your committee, therefore recommend the passage of the following resolution.

Resolved, that Synod does not deem it necessary to pass any law in addition to those already existing, on the subject of voluntary associations.

NO. 3. PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTIONS RESPECTING VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS.—Whereas it is the peculiar province, and the indispensable duty of this Synod, when society is in a state of agitation, as at present, to know “the signs of the times”—and “what Israel ought to do :” and

Whereas it is also the duty of this Synod, to testify in behalf of truth, to condemn sin and testify against those who commit it ; to acquaint our people with their danger, and search into the causes of God's controversy with them and with us,—and

Whereas it is the duty of Synod farther to point out to the people of God the course to be pursued ; that divine judgments may be averted or removed, and the Lord be gracious unto them.—Therefore

Resolved, 1st, That uniting with, or inducing to fellowship, by the members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, in the voluntary and irresponsible associations of the day ;—composed of persons of all professions and of no profession—be condemned, as unwarranted by the word of God, the Subordinate Standards of the church and the practice of our covenant fathers.

Resolved, 2nd, That an inquiry be instituted, in order to ascertain the grounds of God's controversy with us, in the sins of omission and commission, wherewith we are chargeable, in our ecclesiastical relations.

Resolved, 3rd, That the sins, thus ascertained, be confessed, mourned over and forsaken ; and our engagements to the contrary duties be renewed ; that the Lord may return, be entreated of his people and leave us a blessing.

A LETTER ON THE LATE SCHISM.

DEAR BROTHER—

The schism made by three members of our late Synod, shortly after its adjournment, has produced some sensation, and as it is important that the truth should be known, I shall furnish you with the facts, so far as I am in possession of them, that you may lay them before the public.

The ministers engaged in this extraordinary business, were Messrs. Lusk and Steele. One ruling elder who was a member of Synod, and I hear one or two others from a distance were associated with them. General Synod, you recollect adjourned about noon of Friday. The Western S. Synod met that afternoon. At this meeting, none of the three members were present. On Saturday morning, I called at the house where they lodged, to ascertain whether Mr. Steele intended to stay with us till after the Sabbath, and if so, to engage him to preach for me part of the day. He informed me that he intended to start immediately—that he was just getting ready for his journey. Mr. Lusk made a similar statement. In the afternoon I was informed, they were still in town, and that there appeared to be something of mystery hanging over their movements. The fact, however, soon became public, that they had on that day constituted themselves into an independent presbytery, and thus performed the operation of self-amputation, or more expressively, committed ecclesiastical suicide.

As they assigned no reasons, before their departure, we are left to conjecture the cause of this strange movement. The case has no precedent nor parallel in the history of schism. It is perfectly unique. Like all persons who contemplate suicide, they kept their design a profound secret. They appear to have been afraid to discover their purpose, lest Synod would have prevented its accomplishment. If otherwise, why not give Synod, or some of its members intimation of the cause of dissatisfaction, that means might be employed for its removal? If these brethren had objections to the action of Synod, so serious that they could remain no longer with us, why not make them known at the proper time?—Where was the faithfulness or honesty of giving a tacit approbation to the proceedings of Synod, and at the same time be meditating an elopement?

But themselves being witnesses, it can be made appear that no violation of principle, no dereliction of duty on the part of Synod, gave occasion to this schism. They sat, deliberated, and those of them who were constituent members, voted during the whole sessions of Synod till its final adjournment.— This fact is sufficient to make out the case. If Synod had erred so far, as to warrant any of its members to withdraw from the church, could they have conscientiously retained their seats after the act was committed? How does a man of principle act in such a case? Does he not at once protest and, if he find it necessary to maintain a good conscience, then decline the authority of the court? How else could he follow the divine direction, “Plead with your mother, plead?” But so far from doing this, these brethren appeared in general satisfied with the deeds of Synod from first to last. Now if we believe conscience had any thing to do with the whole matter, they must have conscientiously held the closest ecclesiastical fellowship with their brethren, up to the time of the final adjournment of Synod. And how they could conscientiously withdraw from the church afterwards, I am utterly at a loss to conceive. The conclusion is irresistible, that they were not impelled by love to the truth, and zeal for the testimony, still less by affection for the brethren and a desire to promote the unity of the church, in separating themselves from those with whom they had joined counsel in the judicatories of the Lord’s house.

That the whole plan was preconcerted, circumstances put beyond doubt. There are three probable reasons why the consummation of the deed was deferred till after the adjournment of Synod. First, a fear of suspension by that court.— Indeed this reason has been assigned by some of their adherents. But why fear, if they were conscious of a good cause? A good man, on the side of truth, has no such fear. He knows that “what is bound on earth,” in such a case, is *not* “bound in heaven.” Church courts “can do nothing against the truth but for the truth.” If these men had been confident in the righteousness of their cause, they would have done their duty, and regarded suspension as a *fulmen brutum*. Again, they had probably a faint hope of taking some with them.— They knew there was some diversity of opinion among the members of Synod, about the propriety of joining voluntary associations for promoting moral reformation; and by making that a hobby they might expect to ride away with a part of

the church. Two brands cast into the Synod by them; one a memorial, and the other a preamble and set of resolutions against those associations, were extinguished, not much to their satisfaction. If they were serious in wishing the church to require her members to stand aloof from these societies, why could they not wait sixteen months longer—till next meeting of Synod, when it stands pledged to give the subject its early attention? And there was a strong inducement for them to wait, for there was ample evidence of a disposition pretty general and growing, to take such a course. To myself and others, who believe there is a necessity for this, such evidence was highly gratifying. And so it would have been to these brethren, if their hearts had been set on this matter with that sincerity some would have us to believe. Another reason which might have induced them to continue in Synod till its adjournment, was to obtain their quota of the fund for travelling expenses. This they would have missed, had they withdrawn while Synod was sitting. They knew this, and I think it is not uncharitable to suppose it had its weight.

Against these misguided brethren I have no disposition to bring a railing accusation. "To their Master, they stand or fall." They may think they have sufficient reason for making a new rent in the church scarcely restored from the effects of a former calamity. But they should remember, that schism in the church is a serious matter; and sympathies on the one hand, and prejudices on the other, are dangerous guides, especially when they lead and drive away from the church. Before the judgment seat they and we must render our account. And then who will answer for this schism?—The Spirit of God by the apostle, Rom. xvi. 17, has given us solemn warning. "I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them." Let our brethren take heed.

For these things our eyes should weep. Let us be frequent and fervent in prayer, that destructions may come to a perpetual end. For the elect's sake these days of tribulation shall be shortened. The Lord sits on the floods. He will "still the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people." The watchmen shall yet see eye to eye. May the Lord bring us all into the chambers of his gracious presence, and surround us with the arms of almighty protection till his indignation be overpast.

Your brother in covenant bonds,

Allegheny, July 16th, 1840.

THOS. SPROULL.

JOHN KNOX'S SERMON BEFORE QUEEN MARY.

(Continued from p. 118.)

From this 14th verse, unto the end of the 19th, it appears, that the prophet observes no order; yea, that he speaks things directly repugning* one to another; for, *first*, he saith, "The dead shall not live:" afterwards, he affirms, "Thy dead men shall live." *Secondly*, he saith, "Thou hast visited and scattered them, and destroyed all their memory." Immediately after, he saith, "Thou hast increased thy nation, O Lord, thou hast increased thy nation. They have visited thee, and have poured forth a prayer before thee."

Who, I say, would not think, that these are things not only spoken without good order and purpose, but also manifestly repugning one to another? For to live, and not to live, to be so destroyed that no memorial remains, and to be so increased that the coasts of the earth shall be replenished, seems to import plain contradiction. For removing of this doubt, and for better understanding the prophet's mind, we must observe, that the prophet had to do with divers sorts of men; he had to do with the conjured† and manifest enemies of God's people, the Chaldeans or Babylonians; even so, such as profess Christ Jesus have to do with the Turks and Saracens. He had to do with the seed of Abraham, whereof there were three sorts. The ten tribes were all degenerated from the true worshipping of God, and corrupted with idolatry, as this day are our pestilent papists in all realms and nations; there rested only the tribe of Judah at Jerusalem, where the form of true religion was observed, the law taught, and the ordinances of God outwardly kept. But yet there were in that body, I mean in the body of the visible church, a great number of hypocrites, as this day yet are among us that profess the Lord Jesus, and have refused papistry; also not a few that were licentious livers; some that turned their back to God, that is, had forsaken all true religion; and some that lived a most abominable life, as Ezekiel saith in his vision; and yet there were some godly, as a few wheat-corns, oppressed‡ and hid among the multitude of chaff; now, according to this diversity, the prophet keeps divers purposes, and yet in most perfect order.

*Opposing. † Combined. ‡ Covered over, weighed down.

And first, after the first part of the complaint of the afflicted as we have heard, in vehemency of spirit he bursts forth against all the proud enemies of God's people, against all such as trouble them, and against all such as mock and forsake God, and saith, "The dead shall not live, the proud giants shall not rise; thou hast scattered them, and destroyed their memorial." In which words he contends against the present temptation and dolorous state of God's people, and against the insolent pride of such as oppressed them; as if the prophet should say, O ye troublers of God's people! howsoever it appears to you in this your bloody rage, that God regards not your cruelty, nor considers what violence you do to his poor afflicted, yet shall you be visited, yea, your carcasses shall fall and lie as stinking carrion upon the face of the earth, you shall fall without hope of life, or of a blessed resurrection; yea, howsoever you gather your substance, and augment your families, you shall be so scattered, that you shall leave no memorial of you to the posterities to come, but that which shall be execrable and odious.

Hereof the tyrants have their admonition, and the afflicted church inestimable comfort: the tyrants that oppress, shall receive the same end which they did who have passed before; that is, they shall die and fall with shame, without hope of resurrection, as is aforesaid. Not that they shall not arise to their own confusion and just condemnation; but that they shall not recover power, to trouble the servants of God; neither yet shall the wicked arise, as David saith, in the counsel of the just. Now the wicked have their counsels, their thrones, and finally handle* (for the most part) all things that are upon the face of earth; but the poor servants of God are reputed unworthy of men's presence, envied and mocked; yea, they are more vile before these proud tyrants than is the very dirt and mire which is trodden under foot. But in that glorious resurrection, this state shall be changed; for then shall such as now, by their abominable living and cruelty, destroy the earth and molest God's children, see Him whom they have pierced; they shall see the glory of such as now they persecute, to their terror and everlasting confusion. The remembrance hereof ought to make us patient in the days of affliction, and so to comfort us, that when we see tyrants in their blind rage tread under foot the saints of God, we des-

* Manage.

pair not utterly, as if there were neither wisdom, justice nor power above in the heavens, to redress such tyrants, and to redress the dolours of the unjustly afflicted. No, brethren, let us be assured, that the right hand of the Lord will change the state of things that are most desperate. In our God there is wisdom and power, in a moment to change the joy and mirth of our enemies into everlasting mourning, and our sorrows into joy and gladness that shall have no end.

Therefore, in these apparent calamities, (and marvel not that I say *apparent* calamities, for he that sees not a fire is begun, that shall burn more than we look for, unless God of his mercy quench it,* is more than blind,) let us not be discouraged, but with unfeigned repentance let us return to the Lord our God; let us accuse and condemn our former negligence, and steadfastly depend upon his promised deliverance; so shall our temporal sorrows be converted into everlasting joy. The doubt that might be moved concerning the destruction of those whom God exalteth, shall be discussed, if time will suffer, after we have passed through the text. The prophet now proceeds, and saith, "Thou hast increased the nations, O Lord, thou hast increased the nations; thou art made glorious, thou hast enlarged all the coasts of the earth. Lord, in trouble," &c. verses 15, 16.

In these words the prophet gives consolation to the afflicted, assuring them, that how horrible soever the desolation should be, yet should the seed of Abraham be so multiplied, that it should replenish the coasts of the earth; yea, that God should be more glorified in their affliction, than he was during the time of their prosperity. This promise, no doubt, was incredible when it was made; for who could have been persuaded, that the destruction of Jerusalem should have been the means whereby the nation of the Jews should have been increased? seeing that much rather it appeared, that the overthrow of Jerusalem should have been the very abolishing of the seed of Abraham: but we must consider, to what end it was that God revealed himself to Abraham, and what is contained in the promise of the multiplication of his seed, and the benediction promised thereto.

First, God revealed himself to Abraham, to let all flesh understand by the means of his word, that God first called man, and revealed himself unto him; that flesh can do nothing but

* Alluding to the political troubles of that day.

rebel against God ; for Abraham, no doubt, was an idolater, before God called him from Ur of the Chaldees. The promise was made, that the seed of Abraham should be multiplied as the stars of heaven, and as the sand of the sea ; which is not simply to be understood of his natural seed, although it was sometimes greatly increased ; but rather of such as should become the spiritual seed of Abraham, as the Apostle speaks. Now, if we be able to prove, that the right knowledge of God, his wisdom, justice, mercy and power, were more amply declared in their captivity, than at any time before, then we cannot deny, but that God, even when to man's judgment he had utterly rased them from the face of the earth, did increase the nation of the Jews, so that he was glorified in them, and extended the coasts of earth for their habitation. And, for the better understanding hereof, let us shortly try the histories from their captivity to their deliverance ; and after the same, to the coming of the Messiah.

No doubt satan intended, by the dispersion of the Jews, so to have profaned the whole seed of Abraham, that among them neither should have remained the true knowledge of God, nor yet the spirit of sanctification, but that all should have come to a like contempt of God. For, I pray you, for what purpose was it, that Daniel and his fellows were taken into the king's court, were commanded to be fed at the king's table, and were put to the schools of their diviners, soothsayers, and astrologers ? It may be thought that it proceeded of the king's humanity, and of a zeal which he had, that they should be brought up in virtue and good learning ; and I doubt not but it was so understood by a great number of the Jews. But the secret practice of the devil was understood by Daniel, when he refused to defile himself with the king's meat, which was forbidden to the seed of Abraham in the law of their God. Well, God began shortly after to show himself mindful of his promise made by his prophet, and to trouble Nebuchadnezzar himself, by showing to him a vision in his dream ; which the more troubled him, because he could not forget the terror of it, neither yet could he remember what the vision and the parts thereof were. Whereupon were called all the diviners, interpreters of dreams, and soothsayers, of whom the king demanded, if they could let him understand what he had dreamed ; but while they answered, that such a question used not to be demanded of any soothsayer or magician, for the resolution thereof only apper-

tained to the gods, whose habitation was not with men, the charge was given, that they all should be slain : and amongst the rest, Daniel, whose innocence the devil envied, was sought to have suffered the same judgment. He claimed, and asked time to disclose that secret ; (I only touch the history, to let you see by what means God increased his knowledge,) which being granted, the vision was revealed unto him ; he shewed the same unto the king, with the true interpretation of it ; adding, that the knowledge thereof came not from the stars, but only from the God of Abraham, who alone was and is the true God. Which being understood, the king burst forth in his confession, saying, " Of a truth your God is the most excellent of all gods, and he is Lord of kings, and only he that revealeth secrets, seeing that thou couldst open this secret." And when Nebuchadnezzar after that, being puffed up with pride by the counsel of his wicked nobility, would make an image, before which he would that all tongues and nations subject to him should make adoration ; and when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, would not obey his unjust commandment, and so were cast into the flaming furnace of fire ; and yet by God's angels were so preserved, that no smell of fire remained on their persons or garments ; this same king gave a more notable confession, saying, " The Lord God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, is to be praised, who hath sent his angels, and delivered his worshippers that put trust in him, who have done against the king's commandment ; who have rather given their own bodies to torment, than that they would worship another god, except their own God. By me therefore is there made a decree, that whosoever shall blasphemne the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, he shall be cut in pieces, and his house shall be made detestable." Dan. iii.

Thus we see how God began, even almost in the beginning of their captivity, to notify his name, to multiply his knowledge, and set forth as well his power as his wisdom, and true worshipping, by those that were taken prisoners, yea, that were despised, and of all men contemned ; so that the name and fear of the God of Abraham was never before notified to so many realms and nations. This wondrous work of God proceeded from one empire to another ; for Daniel being promoted to great honor by Darius king of the Persians and Medes, fell into a desperate danger ; for he was committed to prison among lions, because he was found breaking

the king's injunction ; not that the king desired the destruction of God's servants, but because the corrupt idolaters, who in hatred of Daniel had procured that law to be made, urged the king against his nature ; but God, by his angel, stopped the lions' mouths, and so preserved his servant ; which being considered, with the sudden destruction of Daniel's enemies by the same lions, king Darius, besides his own confession, wrote to all people, tongues, and nations, after this form: " It is decreed by me, That in all the dominions of my kingdom, men shall fear and reverence the God of Daniel, because he is the Living God, abiding forever, whose kingdom shall not be destroyed, and his dominion remaineth ; who saveth and delivereth, and sheweth signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the lions."

This knowledge was yet further increased in the days of Cyrus, who giving freedom to the captives to return to their own native country, gave this confession ; " Thus saith Cyrus the king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given unto me, and hath commanded me, that a house be built to him in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whosoever therefore of you, that are of his people, let the Lord his God be with him, and let him pass up to Jerusalem, and let him build the house of the Lord God of Israel ; for he only is God that is in Jerusalem. (Ezra i.) Time will not suffer me to treat the points of this confession, neither yet did I for that purpose adduce the history ; but only to let us see, how constantly God kept his promise in increasing his people, and in augmenting his true knowledge beyond men's expectation, when both they that were the seed of Abraham, and the religion which they professed, appeared utterly to have been extinguished. I say, he brought freedom out of bondage, light out of darkness, and life out of death. I am not ignorant, that the building of the temple, and the reparation of the walls of Jerusalem, were long stayed, so that the work had many enemies ; but the hand of God so prevailed in the end, that a decree was made by Darius, (by him I suppose that succeeded to Cambyses,) not only that all things necessary for the building of the temple, and for the sacrifices that were to be burnt there, should be ministered upon the king's charges ; but also, that "whosoever should hinder that work, or change that decree, that a tree should be taken out of his house, and that he should be hanged thereupon ; yea, that his house should be made a dunghill," (Ezra vi.) ; and

thereto he added a prayer, saying, "The God of heaven, who hath placed his name there, root out every king and people, (O that kings and nations would understand!) that shall put his hand, either to change or hurt this house of God that is in Jerusalem." And so, in despite of satan, was the temple built, the walls repaired, and the city inhabited; and in the most desperate dangers it was preserved, until the promised Messiah, the glory of the second temple, came, manifested himself to the world, suffered and rose again, according to the scriptures; and so, by sending forth his gospel from Jerusalem, replenished the earth with the true knowledge of God: and so did God in perfection increase the nation, and the spiritual seed of Abraham.

Wherefore, dear brethren, we have no small consolation, if the state of all things be this day rightly considered. We see in what fury and rage the world, for the most part, is now raised, against the poor church of Jesus Christ, unto which he has proclaimed liberty, after the fearful bondage of that spiritual Babylon, in which we have been holden captives longer space than Israel was prisoner in Babylon itself: for if we shall consider, upon the one part, the multitude of those that live wholly without Christ; and, upon the other, the blind rage of the pestilent papists; what shall we think of the small number of them that profess Christ Jesus, but that they are as a poor sheep, already seized in the claws of the lion; yea, that they, and the true religion which they profess, shall in a moment be utterly consumed?

But against this fearful temptation, let us be armed with the promise of God, namely, that he will be the protector of his church; yea, that he will multiply it, even when to man's judgment it appears utterly exterminated. This promise has our God performed, in the multiplication of Abraham's seed, in the preservation of it when satan labored utterly to have destroyed it, and in deliverance of the same, as we have heard, from Babylon. He hath sent his Son Christ Jesus, clad in our flesh, who hath tasted of all our infirmities, (sin excepted,) who hath promised to be with us to the end of the world; he hath further kept promise in the publication, yea, in the restitution of his glorious gospel. Shall we then think that he will leave his church destitute in this most dangerous age? Only let us cleave to his truth, and study to conform our lives to the same, and he shall multiply his knowledge,

and increase his people. But now let us hear what the prophet saith more :

(To be continued.)

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF THE LAKES, WITH
REMARKS BY A MEMBER THEREOF.

Miami, July 13th, 1840.—The Presbytery of the Lakes, of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, met pursuant to adjournment. Unfinished business was taken up and disposed of in order. Mr. H. Stevenson, a licentiate from the Pittsburgh Presbytery, and Mr. J. Wallace, a licentiate from the Southern Presbytery, were enquired at if in readiness to deliver pieces of trials for ordination assigned last meeting of Presbytery. Answered, in readiness. They were heard in the following order :

Mr. Wallace, a Lecture from Eph. ii. 19-22. Mr. Stevenson, a Lecture from Jno. xvii. 1, 2. Mr. Wallace, a Sermon from Rev. iii. 11. Mr. Stevenson, a Sermon from Rom. viii. 1. The discourses were unanimously sustained as highly satisfactory.

An ordination sermon was preached by Rev. A. McFarland, from Prov. xi. 30—"He that winneth souls is wise." The formula of questions was now read, to which answers were given by the candidates, and the ordaining prayer offered by Rev. J. B. Johnston,—when the candidates were set apart to the office of the Holy Ministry by prayer and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. A charge was then delivered by Rev. J. B. Johnston to the brethren just ordained. The whole occasion was most solemn and impressive—many in the crowded and attentive assembly were in tears.

Mr. Stevenson had, at the late meeting of Presbytery at Utica, O. June 8, "accepted a call from Bethel congregation, Randolph Co. Ill. Mr. Wallace, at the same time, had also accepted a call from Plumb Creek (formerly Old Bethel) congregation, Ill. In pursuance to an order of the Western Sub. Synod, these brethren were dismissed to the Presbytery of Illinois, to be by said Presbytery installed over their respective charges."

Having been advertised of the recent sudden schism, by Rev. R. Lusk and D. Steele, formed immediately after the adjournment of our late Synod in Allegheny, the Presbytery deemed it expedient to take the subject under consideration, when the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously passed:

“Whereas it is our commanded duty to abstain from all appearance of evil: And

Whereas, from the present signs of the times, and from the recent movements and bearings of the American Anti-slavery Society, indicative of POLITICAL ACTION, which has to ‘*The Witnesses*’ not only the appearance of evil, but a demand upon all incorporated with it to give sanction to the constitution of the United States, inconsistent with our dissent from the same: And

Whereas some who have been among the faithful in time past, have stumbled, faltered, and turned aside at a time when, from the whole aspect of our synodical and individual movements, those covenanters who had been in connection with the said society were withdrawing from the same: And

Whereas there is danger of the whole church being charged with a connection which but a VERY FEW had ever formed; thereby giving occasion for the stumbling of those who find fault indiscriminately, and on the ground thereof disregard the order of Christ’s House, in seeking redress and reform: And

Whereas recent movements have occurred in the organization of a reckless faction—a faction which has ostensibly for the justification of its proceedings our assumed connection with the American Anti-slavery Society, &c.—a faction which has lamentably disregarded the means of reform, (*if it were needed*), viz:—“*Plead with your mother, plead*” by petition, complaint, protest and appeal, &c. And

Whereas it is our duty to remove every stumbling-block out of the way of others, by denying ourselves of *privileges even*, when they give occasion to stumble: And

Whereas there are some fifteen months till the meeting of Synod, whose business it properly is to warn of public defection and calamity: And

Whereas delay in warning our people in relation to a recent *schism* may prove deleterious to the cause of truth and order; Therefore

Resolved, 1, That while we urge our people to renew their zeal and to double their diligence in the 'cause of emancipation,' we also recommend all under our care, who may be in connection with the American Anti-slavery Society, to *withdraw* from the same.

Resolved, 2, That all under our care are hereby warned against a recent presbyterial organization by R. Lusk and D. Steele, which, while it purports to be a reformation of the church from 'UNGODLY ASSOCIATIONS!' such as the *Anti-slavery* and *Temperance societies*, is really a coalescence with the schismatical faction formed in 1838, and founded in disorder and rebellion against the judicatories of the Lord's house."

Resolved, That the above preamble and resolutions, with extracts from the minutes of the Presbytery, be published in the "Reformed Presbyterian."

Signed by order of Presbytery.

J. B. JOHNSTON, *Moderator*.

NOTE.—To us the conduct of these quondam brethren appears passing strange. It will be remembered by the members of Synod present at its late sessions in Allegheny, that when the very heated and denunciating paper presented by D. Steele was under consideration, that so far from vindicating association with the Anti-slavery Society, *every* member who spoke on the floor of Synod was decided in the declaration of his opinion; that, from the present state of things, we, as a church, are called upon to stand aloof. The paper, containing very *ultra* preamble and resolutions relating to "associations," really appeared to us to be designed to operate as a brand thrown among the members for the purpose of producing an agitation, under covert of which the brethren who had become ripe for a *schism* and coalescence with the disaffected and disorderly, could plausibly retreat by declinature. Instead, however, of producing an excitement, the brethren experienced a total failure, though the resolutions were so well calculated to draw upon the feelings of the friends of Temperance and Emancipation. It has again and again occurred to us, in reflecting on the direction given to the resolutions—the harmonious action among members in relation to them, and that, instead of a storm being raised in Synod, there was a perfect calm; that a remarkable hand of an all-wise Providence was visible, calling for thankfulness on the part of Synod. Failing, to all intents

and purposes, to produce an excitement, they sat with Synod till its adjournment without giving any, even the least, intimation that defection from the doctrinal standards or order of the church, to which they and we are bound, had been made, and that the same was pertinaciously persevered in without a rational hope of reform. Some such intimation was due to the Mother, even had she been guilty, which she was not, before her Sons were at liberty to renounce her fellowship and sunder the covenant bonds which had so intimately and strongly bound together brethren of the same faith. True, the brethren had given their opinions (strongly enough too) against "associations"—an opinion *substantially* coinciding with the views of *many* and the *practice*, too, of a LARGE MAJORITY of the members of the church, both lay and ministerial. But never had it been intimated by any that there was sufficient ground of separation from the church. True, the *leader* of the faction and *oracle* of the declinature in 1835 had gone about from door to door, trying to make disciples to a "*Safety League*" and "*declinature*," preparatory to the organization of the faction. True, some, in the spirit of true Covenanted Reformers, did come out in the use of appropriate means and seek and obtain a regular disconnection from the Colonization Society in 1836, to which Synod had, in an evil time, under deception of New Light influence, *wickedly* pledged its support. This fact should have admonished the brethren not to be hasty in their departure till they had plead, at least, a little with their mother. The Synod never has manifested a disposition, since disenthralled from New Light men, to shun discussion, redress of grievances, or attention to tender consciences, when *orderly* brought before it. Too true it is, that the disaffected have recently, under covert of the *right of petition*, perverted this sacred right to carry libel and slander to the table of Synod. And because a court refuses to entertain foul slander—charges of defection—covenant breaking—association with the ungodly, &c. under the broad seal of PETITION, is it therefore a logical conclusion that the church refuses to reform—that means of reformation are hopeless—that the call of the Head of the Church is—"Come out of her?" Never was there a more palpable "*Non sequitur*." Even upon the ground, that to associate out of the church, on any principle, or for any object, is sinful, still Synod is not committed. It has never rescinded any law prohibitory of associations—has never flinched

from the application of discipline in the case—has never refused to entertain any *orderly* paper on the subject—has never refused to consider a petition for *new* legislation even. Nothing of all this. And if there be any old standing law in the church, enacted in reforming or suffering times, prohibitory of “associations;” and if *some of us* have associated; to which of the disaffected brethren has been refused the entertainment of a libel? Not one. What law has been violated? By whom? And when and where and by whom the corrective denied? Our brethren would have done the church and themselves a service had they attended to some of these matters before their precipitant exit.

The spirit manifested in the late schism made its appearance in the conduct of D. Steele as early as the Synod of 1836. On page 17 of minutes we find the “*approbation*” formerly given to the “*Colonization Society*” “*withdrawn.*”—See Resolution 7 of the Report of Com. From this resolution D. Steele entered his dissent—page 15. Perhaps the concluding clause contains the offensive and dangerous doctrine from which the good brother dissented. It is in these words—“and transfer our approbation and patronage to the *cause* of abolition.” Mark, it is the *CAUSE*. Not one word is said about the society.* Now, is the *transfer* exceptionable? Or the “*cause* of abolition?” or the whole resolution? We are left to conjecture. The charity that thinketh no evil forbids saying that the withdrawing of approbation given to the Colonization Society could be offensive. The dissent, though from the whole resolution, was evidently designed to bear up—

* On this matter General Synod in 1838 expressed its own judgment of its own deed, in the following decided and explicit manner:

“The terms in which the cause of Anti slavery is referred to, cannot fairly be interpreted to mean an approbation of all the plans and measures of those who are engaged in promoting that cause, or ‘that the society, or societies, acting under that name, was the favored object of these resolutions.’ The very fact, that in the 7th resolution, the approbation formerly given to the Colonization Society is transferred to, not the *abolition society*, but to the *cause of abolition*, makes it manifest that Synod had no design to form a connexion with the latter association similar to that which had previously existed with the former. Still in order to remove every ground of misunderstanding, the following declaratory resolution is recommended for the adoption of Synod.

Resolved, that the ‘approbation and patronage’ which this court did, at its last meeting, give ‘to the cause of abolition’ meant *only* approbation and patronage of the *cause* of abolition or immediate emancipation as it is exhibited in our Testimony.”

See Minutes of Gen. Synod, Ref. Presbyterian Vol. II, p. 302.—Ed.

on the latter clause—the obnoxious “*cause of abolition*,” which Reformed Presbyterians—sons of the Martyrs—children of the Covenants—followers of Renwick and approvers of the Informatory Vindication—true sons of true Scottish Patriots—and lights of religious, civil and personal LIBERTY—must not *approve* and *patronize* in the nineteenth century!!

From consciences so tender as to take defilement and offence at an approbation of “the *cause of abolition* or immediate emancipation as it is exhibited in our Testimony,” what could have been expected but what has been realized—*schism*? Such dissentients would doubtless have withdrawn from the church in the days of the *Westminster Assembly*; for *there* were Selden, the arch *Erastian*, Episcopalians, Independents, Judge Hale, &c.—in the days of United Irishmen; for among them were the Fathers, McKinney and Gibson, &c. and yet retained in the church without the application of her censures: in the days of “association” with the Colonization Society; for in its ranks were McLeod, Cannon, &c. and no discipline applied! And is the church really *so much more* deeply steeped in the *iniquity* of “*ungodly associations*” now than she was then? Has her accumulated guilt arisen mountain high, calling upon her faithful sons to “*come out of her*” lest they be partakers of her sins and receive of her plagues? But alas! in those days the church had no such *reformers* as Rev. R. Lusk and D. Steele.

To many, the course of these brethren may seem unaccountable, especially to those who have not been intimately acquainted with their ecclesiastical career during some three years past. To us, though in some respects strange, yet not so unaccountable. There is a Just One occupying the “*throne*” above the “*living creatures*”—the “*wheels*” and the “*firmament*.”

Some, at least, of our brethren can understand us. And to all our brethren, whether they understand us or not, we have, on this painful subject, but one word more to say:—This *event*, though designed by the *enemy* for harm, is nevertheless designed for good by *Him* who is in the bark, and who rides upon the stormy sea as *its Master*. It will open many eyes—restore much confidence—confirm much peace—tend to greater zeal and co-operation in the cause of Christ’s Covenanted Testimony. The chastisement was needed: and “whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.” Let us seek out the cause, confess and mourn over our sins; and we

shall yet have good cause to praise God—to thank him and take courage. He who “*set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel*” will continue to give power to his “*Two Witnesses*,” and though they may never, during the reign of antichrist, be increased *above*, yet they shall not, till they are slain, fall *below* their proportion—two of the “one hundred and forty and four thousand with the Lamb on the Mount Zion.” “The time of the end” is at hand,—“many shall be tried,” and blessed are they that wait. They shall rest, and stand in their lot at the end of the days.

A MEMBER OF PRESBYTERY.

LETTER TO REV. D. STEELE.

Rev. D. Steele—

Sir :—A friend has just put into my hand an abusive pamphlet, in which I find some remarks signed by you, which are calculated to present me in a false position. It is this fact that induces me to address you in this public manner. What I refer to is the statement you make in relation to the disposition, by Synod, of the preamble and resolutions which you presented on the subject of “Voluntary Associations.” You there state that “Rev. Thos. Sproull, *eager to be relieved of a paper so obnoxious*, moved a postponement of action,” &c. A simple statement of the facts of the case will show that I felt, and of course manifested, no undue eagerness in relation to the disposition of that paper. The report of the Committee on the Signs of the Times, on the petition from Walnut Ridge, was under consideration. That report covered substantially the same ground as your paper. There was considerable discussion in which I took no part. It was evident that the discussion would be a protracted one. I took an opportunity to move a postponement of that report, and, in connexion with it, of your paper, as relating to the same subject, till next meeting of Synod, to receive its early attention. I stated, as the reason of my motion, that there was other business of pressing importance yet to be attended to; that, as every person might see, there was a general tendency in the church toward the ground which your resolutions proposed, for Synod now to occupy; and that there was little doubt but at next meeting of Synod that question could be satis-

factorily settled without much discussion. For these reasons I moved the postponement of both papers. I knew that it was not strictly in order to move to dispose of a paper lying on the table before a motion had passed to take it up. But certainly it never occurred to me that to make such a motion would expose me to the suspicion of considering the paper obnoxious, or of being eager to get rid of it. Nor do I think it occurred to any one whose mind was not under the unhappy influence of prejudice.

Your further remark—"The document was put to rest, as far as the vote of Synod could avail." How could you make this declaration, knowing what you did know? Had it been indefinitely postponed you might have said so. But it was postponed till next meeting of Synod, with the expressed design of taking it up at an early period in its proceedings. Was this "putting it to rest"? Was it not rather giving it importance, by securing for it the early attention of Synod? Whatever you may think, I know Synod does not view it as "put to rest." "At this juncture," you tell us "you were fully satisfied that you could no longer exercise your *ministerial liberty*, nor act the part of an *honest man* in the communion of the General Synod." At what juncture? Just then, when Synod resolved to defer the consideration of your paper till next meeting—about sixteen months. Let it be noticed, that it was not because Synod negatived your preamble and resolutions—nor because it refused to consider them, nor yet treated them uncourteously, that you withdrew. None of these are the alleged reasons—because none of these reasons had existence. But because Synod did not see proper to pass on a grave subject, which proposed new legislation, at the very point of time in which you desired it. Now does not this look like acting more from a pet than from principle?—rather under the influence of peevishness, than guided by an enlightened zeal for truth? It is natural for a father to love his child—but to be so dotingly fond of yours, as to abandon both it and the church, because Synod did not see proper to adopt it, just when you were pleased to present it, is highly unnatural. But seeing you found then that you could no longer conscientiously remain with us, that was your time to withdraw. Why did you let that "juncture" pass without cutting loose from the Synod? And why did you sacrifice your "ministerial liberty," and act the part of a *dishonest man*, according to your own showing, by continu-

ing a member of Synod during the remaining part of its sessions? Whatever may be thought about your *ministerial liberty*, it will not be difficult to settle the question about the *honesty* of remaining after that "juncture," especially when it is known you had not then received your quota of the fund for travelling expenses which you received afterwards. Yes; you sat and acted in a court during its remaining sessions "satisfied" (as you tell us) at the same time, "that you could not there exercise your ministerial liberty nor act the part of an honest man." This is, to say the least of it, not a very fair beginning for a conscientious reformer.

You judged rightly when you deemed an apology necessary for employing a Rabshakeh pamphlet to spread your doings before the public. For whatever homogeneity appears between the general contents of that publication and the proceedings of your new organization—and however much kindred feeling there may be between its editor, and you and your fellow-schismatics—and however true it is, that schism stultifies the mind and turpifies the heart—I still cannot believe that you approve of that publication on the score of either its literature, morality or principle. But the apology itself deserves a passing notice. You say "the resolution to do so was based on the fact that the editor of the Reformed Presbyterian refused to publish certain resolutions passed by the Ohio Presbytery. Still your apology is not very explicit. We are left to conjecture whether your choice of a vehicle, was from resentment, or necessity. It is probable it was the latter.—And dire necessity it must have been to drive to such an alternative! You remark in the same connexion, that Mr. Ronney's refusal to publish the above named resolutions of the Ohio Presbytery, in October 1839, was a reason why you withdrew your patronage from the Reformed Presbyterian at the end of the 2d Volume. Now the second volume ended in February 1839. How, what the editor did after October, could influence you in February the same year, eight months before—passes my knowledge. It is one of several things about you which are to me inexplicable.

As to the name by which your new organization is to be known, it is a matter of very little importance. It will not long need a name. The materials of which it is composed lack that consistence which is necessary to give it stability or permanence. I was indeed astonished when I learned that Mr. N. Johnston was one of your number, especially

when I remembered that both Mr. Lusk and yourself, by your votes at the meeting of Sub. Synod at Brush Creek, showed yourselves to be opposed to his peculiar sentiments with which he has so long pestered the church. From my knowledge of the inflexibility of his character, I am inclined to believe that you have given him some reason to infer that you have changed your mind on these points, Or perhaps they are made common ground. If so, it does not look much like reformation.

I am free to confess that this movement has given me no little pain. Not that it has affected the peace and prosperity of my congregation. I have reason to thank God no effect of this kind has been produced. But it is for your own and the church's sake. The Head of the church put you into the ministry, and endowed you with many desirable qualifications for that office. He said—"Occupy till I come." But you have left your post. You have hid your talent in a napkin. How then will you render an account of your stewardship? Was there cause sufficient to make a new rent in the body mystical of Christ? You say you have been contending for four years against voluntary associations. I thought that, on that subject, in the Synod of 1838, you were satisfied. I know you professed general satisfaction, to me, with the report of the Committee on Discipline on that subject before I presented it; and I know you moved an addition, which was adopted; and that you voted for the adoption of the report. This is knowledge with me. Moreover, why could you not bear a little with those of us who had, with a good design, united with abolition societies, seeing you were not always yourself opposed to joining such associations? You once told me you had attended a meeting to form an Anti-slavery society in your own county, and made motions and speeches. Certainly you did not then feel such an abhorrence of these societies as you do now. You should therefore have felt more disposed to bear with us on this quarter than you have done, especially as you may have had pro-slavery affinities and anti-slavery repulsions, from which others of us were free.

My remarks may seem severe, but it is a severity consistent with friendship. I am grieved for what you have done. Schism is a sin of no ordinary magnitude. I intreat you to consider this step you have taken, and retrace it. Was not the body of Christ already too much defaced and torn by

schism? When we were congratulating ourselves, that by the accession of Mr. Neil, some advance toward restoring the visible unity of the church was made in the extinction of the body to which he had belonged, you and Mr. Lusk step out, as it were, to supply its place.

I hope that you will yet see your error and retract. May the Lord give you the spirit of wisdom and understanding and the fear of the Lord, that you may see your folly and return to your duty.

THOS. SPROULL.

Allegheny, Aug. 6th, 1840.

OBITUARY OF THE LATE JOSEPH FRAZER.

Joseph Frazer, the subject of this brief notice, was born Nov. 21st, 1779, in the parish of Hillsborough, County of Down, Ireland. His parents were both respectable members of the Presbyterian church, and, as was customary among Presbyterians at that time, they trained up their children in a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. The blessings of such instruction were to him of short duration. While yet a child, somewhere about his ninth year, his parents, with their little family, removed to the neighborhood of Rathfriland, where, after a few months, his father was called away by death. He then found by experience that God is the "orphan's help;" for this very bereavement by which he was cast friendless upon the world—was made a means, in the providence of God, of leading him to a more perfect knowledge of His ways. He displayed, while very young, an intense thirst for knowledge. Prompted by this desire, he found opportunities for acquiring information under circumstances which, to most others, would have forbidden the attempt. His remarkable intelligence, for one of his years, recommended him to the favorable notice of some of his neighbors. One of these, a Reformed Presbyterian who took a peculiar interest in him, asked him to accompany him to church to hear Mr. Aikin. This he cheerfully complied with, and was so much delighted with the preaching, that he at once resolved to be a steady hearer.—Many a time has he expressed to the writer of this notice, the earnest expectation with which he would await the day of Mr. Aikin's return, which was at that time every third Sabbath. He soon became acquainted with the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and was convinced of their truth, and at the age of seventeen made a public profession of them by uniting himself with the congregation of Rathfriland, of which Mr. Aikin was pastor. He continued a faithful and exemplary member of that congregation until the year 1831, a period of about 35 years, when he and his family emigrated to America. On his arrival in this country he settled in the city of Philadelphia, where he resided until his death.

In the contest in the Reformed Presbyterian Church in this land, which had commenced before his arrival, and which ended in the separation of Dr. Wylie and his party in 1833, he was exceedingly active and zealous; and by his unflinching integrity, gained the love and confidence of those friendly to the cause of truth, and the esteem even of its enemies. No unequivocal evidence of the estimation in which he was held by his brethren, for intelligence and faithfulness, is furnished by the fact that soon after his uniting with the Philadelphia congregation he was chosen to the office of ruling elder by a *unanimous vote*.

He was a man of strong passions and rather excitable temper; but this was kept in due subjection by his sound and vigorous judgment and christian prudence. His opinions were all founded on mature reflection and maintained with decided firmness; yet when convinced of a mistake, (which seldom happened, however) he would cheerfully acknowledge it. His powers of argumentation were of the first order; he was ever ready "to give a reason" for any opinion he held, and his views were always stated with such simplicity and clearness, and supported by arguments of such irresistible force; that few, very few, could successfully sustain an argument against him.

He was honest and upright in all his dealings. Of him it may truly be said that he never betrayed a friend—never violated a trust. His friendship was genuine and lasting. In his mode of life he was from necessity economical, yet his economy had no tinge of meanness.

He was a philanthropist. Like every good man he loved his family and his friends. He loved the church of God and the people of God, and in an especial manner the members of the church of which he was so long a member and an ornament. But his philanthropy did not end here. It was not circumscribed by geographical limits. He looked on himself as a brother of the species and linked all his energies with the cause of its melioration.

He was a truly benevolent man. His love to mankind was not a mere abstraction. As he had opportunity he did good to all men.—Although limited in his means, his benevolence was not of the "Be ye warmed and be ye filled description" which withholds "those things that are needful for the body." He was a warm and steady friend to all truly benevolent enterprizes. In imitation of the example of his blessed Lord and Master, and animated by that love to man shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, he could cheerfully sit down even with publicans and sinners, if thereby he could be the instrument of turning them from the error of their way, and ministering to their temporal and eternal welfare.

But what is better than all, he was a genuine exemplary christian—"an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile." He lived as a "stranger and pilgrim upon the earth." His "conversation was such as to minister grace to the hearers." Many of his friends can bear a willing testimony to the words of Godly edifying which proceeded from his mouth. His last illness which was lingering and severe, he bore with christian resignation and fortitude. He blessed his two

sons ; and committed the aged partner of his life to the protection of him who is the "widow's stay." He said he had nothing to leave her but the Book of God. He exhorted her to make it her constant companion and she would experience the fulfilment of the gracious promises of a covenant keeping God who hath said "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." He calmly yielded up the Ghost in the full hope of a blessed and glorious resurrection, August 29, 1839. May those who mourn his loss "live the life of the righteous, and their latter end be like his."

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD IN IRELAND.

We have received no official accounts respecting the proceedings of this judicatory at its late meeting ; nor any intelligence otherwise, excepting the important fact, that the whole Eastern Presbytery, embracing Messrs. Paul, Henry, Alexander, C. Houston and Niven, Ministers, withdrew schismatically from the Synod. A friend, who has the intelligence direct from Ireland, writes us, that a number of papers were presented in the committee of bills, (this committee embraces the whole Synod) by Dr. Paul and his party, which papers were memorials from Dr. Paul and congregations under the care of the Eastern Presbytery, calling upon Synod, judicially to condemn certain alleged errors taught in the pages of the Covenanter. These memorials were rejected, on which the members from the Eastern Presbytery, and seven commissioners from congregations, gave in their protest and declinature.

At this event in the adorable Providence of the church's Head, we do, under all the circumstances, most heartily rejoice. For years, a very unpleasant state of things has existed in the Irish Synod, and matters, in this respect, have certainly been growing worse instead of better. There was a diversity of sentiment between ministers of that one Presbytery and the other members of Synod, on vital doctrines of a covenanted reformation. This is now plain from the alleged ground of declinature by Dr. Paul and his party. Such being the case, the church is better rid of men, who have become tired or ashamed of her principles, and who have been for years acting the insubordinate part which has at length been consummated in the act of self excision. We hope to have the particulars in time for our next No., and, if so, will lay them at length before our readers. Let us all be reminded that these are trying times, especially to the remnant witnessing for the whole truth as it is in Jesus. Men fall off on the *left* hand and on the *right*. The spirit of schism is rampant. Every man who cannot have every thing in his own way is greatly dissatisfied, and some of such have shown themselves ready to abandon the church, proclaim independence, set up a faction, and thus mar the visible unity of the body of Christ, open anew the wounds that have made, and cause

the blood to flow from wounds made by their own piercing. Let all true Covenanters look to God for grace, to possess their souls in patience, encouraged by the consideration that these things evince that the time of the end draweth near.

ITEMS.

The Publication Society of the 1st Reformed Presbyterian congregation of the city of New-York have just published a new edition of the "*Cloud of Witnesses*." Arrangements have been made for forwarding, as soon as possible, to the bounds of each congregation in our church a supply of copies. In the circular issued by the Society, they say:—"Our object is not gain, but to circulate through the church this scarce and deeply interesting history of the faithful contendings and sufferings of the saints of other and perilous times, for God's truth and covenant, and whose memory is dear to every Covenanter's heart; and hence this edition will be furnished at 75 cents per copy. Agents to sell for cash on delivery, with an allowance to those who pay for 12 copies or more."

We earnestly recommend this work to all the friends of truth, and to all who desire to learn or become more fully acquainted with the pure and holy principles maintained by, and sealed with the blood of, those noble martyrs who counted not their lives dear in the defence of Christ's cause and testimony, during the period of bloody persecution that terminated with the martyrdom of the immortal James Renwick. Few works are so well calculated to increase and strengthen a fixed attachment to the sacred principles of a covenanted work of reformation; few so fully exhibit the blessed influence of Divine truth in supporting the soul under trials and sufferings; and few impart as much encouragement to the faith and hope of those who in patience wait for the crown of life that shall be given to them who continue faithful even unto death. Herein, as in a glass, we see divine strength perfected in weakness, grace made sufficient for the darkest day, and joy unspeakable experienced in the deepest sorrow. In a word, we are here encompassed with "a great cloud of Witnesses" whose doctrines, character, holy though suffering, life, and triumphant, though bloody, death, should induce us to lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race that is set before us.

We ask special attention to the following Proposals for publishing a seasonable, useful and much needed work. The author, Rev. D. Scott, is very favorably known as a writer to many of our readers. From the knowledge we have of the plan of the proposed work, and of the manner in which the subjects are treated, as well as from the im-

portance of the subjects themselves, we can confidently recommend it to all who desire to see the distinctive principles of our church clearly stated, forcibly illustrated, and their importance pressed upon the understanding and the heart.

As the publication depends upon the encouragement given by the subscription lists and otherwise, we hope the friends of a Covenanted work of Reformation, and the Witnesses for truth, will use such diligence, and shew such readiness in affording their patronage, that the author may be encouraged to put the work to press without unnecessary delay. It will furnish what, in our judgment, the condition of the church calls loudly for at the present day. It will be an invaluable companion to the "Cloud of Witnesses," noticed above, inasmuch as it will shew that the principles sealed by the blood of many martyrs, are the "Distinctive Principles of the Reformed Presbyterian church."

PROPOSALS

For publishing by subscription, a Work entitled Distinctive Principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

The work will contain from 300 to 400 pages, 12 mo.; be bound substantially in figured cloth, and delivered to subscribers at 75 cents per copy, payable on delivery. Those who act as agents shall be allowed one copy for every ten subscribers they obtain.

The return of Prospectuses, or the forwarding of the number of subscribers, is requested as early as the beginning of December if possible, sent to the subscriber at ALBANY, N. Y.

Ministers, licentiates and other friends are respectfully requested to act as agents and otherwise use their influence in obtaining subscribers.

The work will be put to press as soon as the number of subscribers will warrant.

DAVID SCOTT.

Albany, 18th August, 1840.

Self-torture.—The following awful mode of self-torture, practiced by the native devotees in Calcutta and vicinity, is described by Rev. Dr. Duff. It consists in this: A number of devotees enter into a vow that they will lie down on their backs on the earth, exposed to the blazing sun by day, and the chilling dews by night. They will have in one hand a little earth, and in the other a few seeds. With the one hand they place the earth under the lower lip, and with the other plant the seeds in it; and the vow is, that they will lie there, without moving or speaking, or receiving any nourishment whatever, until the seeds sprout and germinate, and then they will return to their homes.

The Eastern Sub. Synod is to meet in Albany on the 2nd Tuesday of October next, at 10 o'clock A. M.

The Southern Presbytery is to meet, same place, on the day following.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

OCTOBER, 1840.

No. VIII.

CHRONOLOGICAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE COVENANTED CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND.

The reformation from popery had received the sanction of civil authority in 1560. The order of the reformed church was exhibited in the Book of Discipline, which was published during the same year, and approved by the General Assembly. This Book of Discipline contains the distinguishing principles of Presbyterianism. The order of the church was more fully developed in the second Book of Discipline which was adopted in 1578. This presented the system of Presbyterian order and government in its most perfect form. In 1580, when the national covenant was first adopted, this system of discipline was recognized and sworn to, as a part of their confession of faith, in the following words—"we shall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and discipline of this kirk." The only discipline known in the "kirk" was that contained in the second, which had superseded the first Book of Discipline. The system of government adopted by the church claims the vantage ground of Divine right. It was adopted and is retained as the government of the covenanted church, not merely because of its excellence, but because it is instituted by the Head of the church, and described in the word of God. The Scottish reformation, embracing its Presbyterian system of government, was recognized by the civil authority in 1592. Presbyterianism was thus acknowledged as part of the established religion. The attainment of this security we have presented to our readers in a preceding number. King James and his servile cour-

tiers yielded to this, however, rather as a matter of necessity than from any regard which they had to Presbyterianism. The system was far from being congenial to a man of James' disposition and principles. Weak and imbecile, he was naturally inclined to tyranny in his administration; and the whole tenor of his policy showed that he was far from being scrupulous as to the means of obtaining his ends. He was mean, cowardly, intriguing and deceitful. While professing to be a Protestant he had drunk but too deeply of the spirit of popery, which teaches that the end sanctifies the means! From a man of James' character the covenanted church of Scotland had nothing to hope: when it answered his purpose, indeed, he could flatter her, as we find him doing when, in 1590, he declared that she was the "purest kirk in the world. The kirk of Geneva keepeth Pasch and Yule. What have they for them? They have no institution. As for our neighbor kirk in England, their service is an evil said mass in English; they want nothing of the mass but the liftings. I charge you, my good people, ministers, doctors, elders, nobles, gentlemen, and barons, to stand to your purity; and I, forsooth, so long as I brook my life and crown, shall maintain the same against all deadly." "Whether," says the acute biographer of Melville, "James was on this occasion seized with a sudden fit of devotion and affection for his mother church, or whether he merely adopted this language to gain the favor of the ministers, may admit of a doubt."

The watchful friends of the church had strong reasons to suspect the sincerity of the king, from the manner in which he treated the popish lords. These had been guilty in several instances, of gross outrages upon the peace of the country; were known to be intriguing with foreign papists for the restoration of popery in Scotland; and had been detected in overt acts of treason; they were yet secretly countenanced by James, who could not be prevailed on to punish them. The conduct of the king and the court thus justly excited the suspicion of the General Assembly of 1596. "At the approach of any threatened danger we have seen," says Mr. Aikman, "bonds entered into for the preservation of the religion and liberty of the country; and in times of eminent peril, the practice had been productive of the happiest results. It was now proposed to renew these sacred obligations, not by subscribing as formerly, but, after a confession of their own sins and that of the nations, solemnly to dedicate them-

selves to the Lord by uplifting their hands. The members of the Assembly met first in the Little Church on Tuesday, 30th of March, at nine o'clock in the morning. John Davidson of Prestonpans, presided on the occasion. His sermon and prayer, in which he made acknowledgment of sins with promise of amendment, had so powerful effect upon the congregation that they melted into tears; and before dismissal, rising in their seats, they all lifted up their right hands, and renewed their covenant with God, protesting to walk more circumspectly and use greater diligence in future. At the desire of the Assembly—as many of the ministers were not present—this covenant was renewed in a similar manner by all the synods, presbyteries, and almost all the different congregations in the country. A standing committee was appointed by the Assembly to watch the measures of government and the intrigues of their enemies, who relaxed nothing in their exertions.

The arbitrary conduct of James and his court, and the countenance given by them to popery, still further alarmed the church: the ministers of the metropolis particularly endeavored to arouse the energies of the people, by pointing out the danger to which the church was exposed. The course adopted by the ministers of Edinburgh appears perfectly justified by the circumstances of the case: the religious liberty of the country was evidently in jeopardy, and as faithful watchmen they could not be silent. But as evil was determined against them by the court, when summoned to appear before the privy council—the ministers having consulted with their friends—were advised, considering the temper of the court, to decline appearing. Accordingly some of them sought refuge in England, and others concealed themselves in the neighborhood. The retirement of the ministers was the sequel to an incident the knowledge of which casts considerable light on the course pursued by James. He has been sometimes suspected of an undue attachment to popery, and hence the persecution of the Presbyterian church, and the efforts that were made to subvert it. The unaccountable forbearance towards the popish lords certainly gives reason for the opinion that the king was not strongly attached to Protestantism to say the least. It is perhaps, however, as near the truth to say, that religion was only a secondary thing with him. Personal piety he does not appear to have possessed; all that he cared about religion was how it might subserve state policy.

This, we think, explains his dislike to Presbyterianism, and his preference to Prelacy, whether in connexion with Roman apostacy or the *half reformed* church of England. He hated the republican principle which forms the essential element in the Presbyterian system of government. He was determined to control the religion of the country, that he might govern absolutely. The incident to which we have referred, and which we think explains the object of attacking the covenanted church of Scotland, was the trial of Mr. David Black, minister of St. Andrews. Mr. Black was summoned to appear before the council to answer "for speeches uttered in the pulpit." When Mr. Black appeared before them, having no other object but to obtain from him an acknowledgment of *their right* to judge "in cases of freedom of speech in the pulpit, they restricted the libel to a charge which, it was imagined, would not come within the term spiritual." It was said that in one of his discourses he had called the queen of England an atheist: the English ambassador was urged to complain of this to the king. In the opinion of Mr. Black and his brethren in the ministry this, too, was a spiritual matter, as it related to the religious character of the queen. Mr. Aikman remarks that, "the English ambassador, who had been unwillingly dragged into the business, expressed himself satisfied with a private explanation; but this was not what the king wanted—it was a public acknowledgment of his *supreme right to judge* in ecclesiastical matters; and therefore instead of dropping the subject when the party said to be offended declared himself satisfied, a new libel, containing new charges collected since his former appearance, and consisting of detached passages from his sermons for three years back, was exhibited against Black."

The ministers constituting the commission of the church, making common cause with a persecuted brother, and determined to maintain their right to freedom of speech, drew up a paper in which they decline the jurisdiction of the king and council in matters spiritual, which they sent to all the presbyteries for approval. In a short time this received the signature of four hundred ministers. This becoming known, the commissioners were commanded by a public proclamation to leave Edinburgh, declaring at the same time the commission to be unlawful, and forbidding for the future all such assemblies on pain of rebellion. On the 30th of November, 1596, Mr. Black was brought to trial. He declined the au-

thority of the king and council as to all the charges except one, in which he was charged with having "convocated diverse noblemen, barons, and others within St. Andrews, in June, 1594, and caused them to take arms, thereby usurping the power of the king and the civil magistrate." On this charge he offered to stand trial. His declinature, however, in relation to what was properly spiritual, was over-ruled. He was sentenced to be confined beyond the river Tay till his majesty should have resolved what further punishment to inflict. This was followed by an order, from the king, that ministers should not receive their stipends till they subscribed a bond, binding themselves "to obey the king and privy council." The part taken by the ministers of the city of Edinburgh, in conjunction with several noblemen and barons, for curbing the high-handed and arbitrary procedure of the court led to the voluntary exile of the ministers, as has been related above.

The trial of Black, and the events which followed in connexion with it, demonstrated the intention of the court; that they were determined to obtain for the king universal supremacy in the nation over spiritual as well as civil matters. This the king and the court well knew never could be attained while the church of Scotland held fast her form of government: Presbyterianism must therefore be levelled with the dust, that on its ruins might be raised the Erastian supremacy of the civil magistrate. "No bishop, no king," was a favorite maxim with James; and such were his notions of government, that he considered supremacy over spiritual matters in the church essential to his power. "The papists," he said, "were seeking his life, and they were dexterous king-killers, but the Scottish ministers were seeking his crown, which was dearer to him than his life." The supreme Headship of Christ, as the only king of the church, the Presbyterian ministers were resolved to maintain, however, whatever might be the consequences to themselves, or whatever the king and the court might think of their loyalty. The charge of sedition, which has been so often and so thoughtlessly brought against the leading Presbyterians of that period, is most wanton and unfounded. They were faithful to God and the church; but they were not traitors to their country. "We must," says Dr. Cook, "if we calmly investigate the history of the period at present under review, be satisfied that in a great degree we owe to the intrepidity of the clergy the lib-

erties which we now enjoy, and that, had they remained silent, not branding the measures which they saw to be pregnant with the heaviest evils, the king would either have destroyed every vestige of freedom, or, what was more likely, his throne would have been subverted."

James was resolved that prelacy should succeed the presbyterian form of government. In this he was encouraged by fawning and unprincipled courtiers, and, we are sorry to add, by some Presbyterians, who, recreant to the truth of God and their own covenant engagements, became the servile tools of an arbitrary court, by giving their influence to subvert the constitution of the church. Caution was felt to be necessary in this work of destruction; the ultimate designs of the court were not avowed; but public feeling was tried by innovations, which, in disguise, were really primary steps to the introduction of prelacy. The first and most important of these was the admission of bishops and abbots to a place in the legislature. Thus the temporal power of Episcopacy was revived, and the order of Bishops recognized as the third estate in parliament. This act of the legislature was passed in 1597. Before this, persons in possession of the episcopal revenues had sat in parliament in the name of the church. The General Assembly had frequently complained of this, as unjust; these complaints were made the *pretence* of the act of 1597, giving bishops and abbots a place in parliament as the representatives of the church. The evil of which the church complained was not removed by this; it was rather increased. In the first place the church disclaimed all pretensions to a representation in parliament. It was inconsistent with their views of the spiritual character of the church of God. In the second place, these pretended representatives could not represent the Presbyterian church, if the principle had been right, because they were professedly episcopal: it was nothing else than the revival of the temporal power of episcopacy. The complaints of the General Assembly were, however, made the stalking-horse to deceive the church. "Taking advantage," says Aikman, "of these previous surmises, the king, who knew any direct proposal to bring in Episcopacy would have met with an unanimous and decisive opposition, chose this disguised method of introducing it; to afford those who were not averse either to the state or emolument of a hierarchy an excuse for giving their support to a plan from which, if it had been avowed, their pride and repeated

professions of adherence to the Presbyterian form of church government would have deterred them."

The church became alarmed; and the discerning part of the ministers endeavored to influence the nobility against the measure: but the superior weight of the court, and the promises and, perhaps we should add, the threatenings, of the king prevailed. The most determined hostility to this act of the legislature was expressed in the judicatories of the church, particularly in the Synods of Lothian and Fife. In the latter the venerable Ferguson, the last of the primitive reformers, warned them not "to accept the proffered boon, and advised them, as the prophetess did her countrymen, *Equo ne credite, Teucri.*" Davidson, another minister who spoke of the parliamentary commission as a bishop in disguise, exclaimed—"Busk! busk! busk him as bonnilie as ye can, and fetch him in as fairly as ye will, we can see him well eneuch, we see the horns of his mitre."

The consent of the General Assembly to the innovation was still wanting, and the necessity of this was felt by the court to the success of their scheme. At the following meeting of the Assembly every art was practised to ensure a majority in favor of it—flatteries, promises, and the most violent stretch of voluntary power. The indomitable Melville was driven from the Assembly by royal force. It was in vain that he plead his right,—he must either retire or the Assembly should be broken up. But, says a lauded writer, "although the leader was dismissed, a considerable portion of his spirit remained." The arts of the court nevertheless succeeded, and the act of parliament was approved by a majority of ten. The most determined opposition continued, however, to be made by the inferior judicatories of the church, but without success; power was on the side of the oppressor. Having gained this first step, James employed every private and underhand means of preparing the public mind for a direct attack on the church. His accession to the English throne in 1603, gave him a vast increase of power; and his premeditated designs against the church of Scotland were sustained and encouraged by the English bishops and high-churchmen, who looked with a jealous eye on the Presbyterian system.

The first direct attack, in view of establishing prelacy, made on the church, was the prevention of meetings of the General Assembly. Under one pretence or another having

prevented the Assembly from meeting for a whole year, he finally, by an arbitrary mandate, postponed it indefinitely. The Presbyterians, with a view to maintain their independence, met in Aberdeen on the second of July, 1605. Having constituted, and while reading a letter addressed to them by the privy council, a messenger entered, and in the king's name charged them to dismiss on pain of rebellion. The Assembly adjourned, after having appointed another meeting in September following. For this, which, says McCrie, "was equally marked by firmness and moderation," the ministers who attended were seized and brought to trial on a charge of treason, and banished their country for life. The questions at issue between the court and them, says the historian last quoted, "amounted to this, whether they were to be ruled by law or by the arbitrary will of the prince; whether royal proclamations were to be obeyed when they suspended statutes enacted by the joint authority of king and parliament? This question came afterward to be debated in England, and was ultimately decided by the establishment of the constitutional doctrine which confines the exercise of royal authority within the boundaries of law. But, it cannot be denied, and it must not be forgotten, that the ministers of Scotland were the first to avow this rational and salutary doctrine, at the expense of being denounced and punished as traitors: and that their pleadings and sufferings in behalf of ecclesiastical liberty, set an example to the patriots of England. In this respect complete justice has not been done to their memory, nor has expiation been made for the injuries done to the cause which they maintained by the slanderous libels against them, which continue to stain the pages of English history."

Presuming that the severe proceedings against the members of the Assembly held at Aberdeen must have subdued and intimidated the ministers generally, it was deemed a favorable time for taking another step in the introduction of prelacy; accordingly, the parliament held in Perth, August, 1606, completed what was left undone by the act of 1597, by restoring the bishops to *all* their ancient and accustomed honors, dignities, prerogatives, privileges, and livings, and at the same time revived the chapters which had been suppressed by the General Assembly. The preamble to this act of the legislature recognizes the king as "absolute prince, judge, and governor over all persons, estates and causes,

both spiritual and temporal." Against this the ministers made a strenuous though unsuccessful effort. On the day on which the act was to be ratified Melville, who had been appointed by his brethren to offer a protest, gained admission with difficulty into the house; but was prevented from taking it, according to legal form, by an order to remove him. This, however, was not effected till he had succeeded in making his business sufficiently known. The protest was respectful, but expressed the most decided opposition to the restoration of the bishops. "It reminded the members of parliament that they were not lords over the church, but nursing fathers to her; and that, instead of assuming a power to mould her government according to their pleasure, it was their duty to preserve and maintain that which had been given her by her Divine Head."

The bishops were now restored to their honors and titles, and partly to their incomes; yet still they had obtained no spiritual power in the church, which could not be accomplished by a mere act of the legislature, it was necessary to effect it by the medium of the church itself. Here the influence of some individuals was dreaded, who could not be corrupted by promises nor made to yield by threatenings; it was necessary that these should be removed before, even any preliminary steps could be proposed. Under the pretence of holding a conference with some of the leading Presbyterian ministers, the king addressed letters to Andrew Melville, James Melville, William Scott, John Carmichael, William Watson, James Balfour, Adam Coult, and Robert Wallace. Every method was taken to overcome the fidelity of these men while in London, but in vain! Neither of the Melvilles were allowed to return to Scotland; Andrew, after several years confinement in the tower, was allowed to banish himself to France; James was confined to the north of England; and the others, although allowed to return, were restricted to remote and separate districts, where they could have no influence in the affairs of the church. "This open breach of faith," says Mr. Aikman, "it is impossible to stigmatize in language too strong. The ministers were invited to an amicable conference, and to give their advice upon the state of the church, which when they had obeyed, they were insulted, imprisoned, and banished without a trial, and without the imputation of a crime. Throughout the whole transaction there is a mean, pitiful vindictiveness that, while it

marks strongly a spirit of implacable animosity and personal revenge, places James and his councillors in the most despicable point of view. At the same time the noble, independent spirit of the plain, persecuted ministers throws a lustre around their character, which shines with peculiar brilliance when contrasted with the low, sycophantish behavior of their mitred opponents."

In 1607 James cited an assembly or convention of ministers. The members were nominated by the king, who, in letters sent to the different presbyteries, directed them to choose such persons as he knew would prove subservient to his will. And by private letters these were ordered to attend, whether appointed by their presbyteries or not. By such means about one hundred and thirty-six ministers were collected, several of whom had no commission from their presbyteries, and some had even been interdicted: they nevertheless assumed the name of a legal assembly. Even in this meeting, constituted as it was, it would not have been safe to have proposed the complete establishment of episcopacy all at once: the court satisfied itself in having an act passed appointing constant moderators in every presbytery, and ordaining the bishops or their vicars constant moderators in their respective synods. "But still," says Mr. Aiton, in his life of Alexander Henderson, "the church stood true to itself. All the synods but that of Angus refused to admit the bishops as constant moderators, and many of the presbyteries acted on the same independent principle. To bring these over, two meetings of the assembly were held at Linlithgow and Falkland in the years 1608 and 1609, but to little purpose." Synods and presbyteries protested against the assembly as illegal. "The ministers were sent to prison or declared rebels, and forced to abscond for disobedience. The Synods were interrupted, dispersed and prohibited, and the whole land was thrown into confusion."

In June, 1610, an assembly was called to meet in Glasgow. The king sent letters to the different presbyteries nominating the persons to be sent to the assembly; these, with the bishops, met at the appointed time. From an assembly so constituted no opposition was either expected or received. James, "already armed with authority," says the last quoted writer, "to terrify into compliance with his new arrangements all who were conscientious, offered money in hand, annual pensions, and liberal promises, to secure the

less scrupulous. In this memorable, or golden assembly as it was called at the time, the meeting at Aberdeen was condemned, and the power of calling assemblies declared to appertain to the king by the prerogative of his royal crown; bishops were declared to be constant moderators in synods and presbyteries, presentations to benefices were to be directed to the bishop of the bounds; ministers, when admitted to their parishes, were, by an oath, to acknowledge the king to be head of the church; and bishops were to preside at the trial and deposition of ministers, and at the excommunication of offenders. In a word, almost the last glimmering of presbyterianism in Scotland was at this time extinguished."

The well known parliamentary statute of 1592 which gave a national establishment to presbyterian protestantism was rescinded by parliament in 1612. From an assembly that would in such circumstances be held, nothing like manly independence or virtuous resistance could have been expected. It was the obvious design of James and his minions to break down the independence of the church; they had recourse at first to violence and fraud, and to these they latterly added bribery and corruption. The faithful were removed or silenced; and the king, sustained by the power of England, and urged on by the English hierarchy to compel the Scottish presbyterians to conform in all things to the episcopal order, called an assembly in 1618 at Perth. Here were passed the famous resolutions, ever since known as the five Articles of Perth. They were, kneeling at the sacrament,—private communion,—private baptism,—confirmation of children,—and the observance of festivals. Though the assembly was not permitted to discuss these articles, yet there were a minority of forty-five whom no promises could allure, nor threatenings terrify.

The imposition of these articles may not appear severe to those who only look at the surface of things, and whose religious system consists in an undefined but spurious charity, that thinks as little "evil" of error as truth! Our venerable covenanters of the seventeenth century upon whom they were pressed thought and felt differently. Though their leading and eminent ministers were banished, thrust into corners and gagged; and the doom of rebels and traitors held up in terrorem to force all into compliance, yet these sturdy presbyterians indignantly and manfully resisted it, as an encroachment on the Redeemer's rights and upon their own independence.

Was it right or judicious to force upon the Scottish covenanters articles which, in the judgment of those who imposed them, were not of vital importance, but which were extremely obnoxious to the former? On their own principles, was it christian thus, unnecessarily, to give offence, to cast into the church of Scotland a firebrand of division? Was it not inhuman, not to say unchristian, to tempt, ensnare, and by penal laws compel conscientious men to violate their solemn vows and covenants? The covenanters, however, had stronger objections than these to the five articles of Perth.

1. Kneeling at the sacrament. This is in opposition to the example of Christ, who administered the institution to his disciples in a table posture. Kneeling was introduced by the apostacy of Rome in connexion with the idolatrous doctrine of transubstantiation. The act of kneeling was designed to express homage to the sacramental elements. This is as palpable idolatry, as ever was committed by even Pagans.

2. Private communion. This had its origin in the popish dogmas that the sacrament of the mass was a sacrifice for sin—that it had a perfect efficacy in saving sinners; hence it was administered to the dying just before death. In a word, it is of the same character with the extreme unction of the papists. And it is put in the place of the righteousness of Christ.

3. Private baptism. This corruption is traceable also to popery; and has its origin in the false doctrine, held in common by the Romish apostacy and the church of England, that, baptism is regeneration. In the church of England catechism, the person confirmed is made to answer that by baptism he “was made a disciple of Christ and an heir of the kingdom of God.” It was in this exceedingly mistaken notion of the nature of baptism, that its private administration was ordained by the Perth articles, and is still practised by Papists and Episcopalians.

4. Confirmation. This is an act of will-worship, counted by the papists one of their seven sacraments. It never was appointed by Christ, or his apostles as a sacrament, it ought therefore to be rejected. As used in the church of England it is equally unauthorized—by confirmation, through the medium of the bishop, all former sin is said to be pardoned. A doctrine and practice as evidently false and dangerous as that of baptismal regeneration.

5. The observation of festivals. Christ has instituted only one day as a commemoration of great events, namely, the Sabbath. The addition of others is unauthorized, sinful and in practice has been exceedingly injurious to religion.—Wherever these festivals have prevailed the Sabbath has been uniformly neglected. This is remarkably illustrated in connexion with the enforcing of the Perth articles. “The same wise and religious monarch,” says Aikman, in the language of irony, “who commanded a cessation from all kinds of labor on the arbitrary holidays, on the penalty of being punished with all rigor in person and property, recommended pastimes and revelry on the Lord’s day.”

Entire conformity to the English form of worship, by the introduction of the English liturgy was the next point to which James and his courtiers set themselves. The forcing of this during the reign of his successor, Charles, ultimately led to the final overthrow of Episcopacy in Scotland, which commenced the era of the second reformation.

THE NECESSITY OF GOOD WORKS.

(Continued from p. 150.)

I proceed now, as was proposed, to show, In what respects, or for what important purposes, good works are *indispensably requisite*.

1. They are necessary, as just *acknowledgments* of God’s sovereign authority over believers, and as *acts of obedience* to his righteous commands. “For this is the *will* of God,” says an apostle, “even our sanctification.” 1 Thess. iv. 3. The infinite Majesty of heaven hath not laid aside his right of dominion over believers, by affording them deliverance from condemnation, and a right to eternal life; but, on the contrary, hath, in that wonderful way, laid them under additional obligations to “holiness in all manner of conversation.” The glorious liberty to which he has called them, is given them for this purpose, “That they may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of their life.” Luke i. 74, 75. He has delivered them from the law as a covenant, for this very end, That, according to the law as a rule, “They might serve him in newness of Spirit,” and “be

careful to maintain good works." The sovereign *will* of God as the supreme rule of duty, is expressed in his commands; and therefore, universal and perpetual obedience to them, is necessary.

2. Good works are indispensably requisite, as being one special *end of the election, redemption, regeneration and effectual vocation* of the objects of God's everlasting love. They are one design of the *election* of sinners. "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hath chosen us in him," says the apostle Paul, "that we should be *holy*, and without blame before him in love." Eph. i. 4. They are also one end of the *redemption* of elect sinners. For the same apostle says, "Christ gave himself for us, that he might *redeem* us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 14. They are one of the designs, too, of the *regeneration* of God's elect. "We are his workmanship," says our apostle, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. ii. 10. Good works are the native and necessary operations of a regenerate and sanctified soul. Grace in the heart, is a living, an operative principle of holiness in the life. Good works are likewise one of the ends to be attained by their *effectual vocation*. "As he which hath called you is holy," says the apostle Peter, "so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." 1 Pet. i. 15.

3. Good works are also necessary, inasmuch as they are one *great design of the gospel*, and of the *ordinances and providential dispensations* of the Lord. As for the *gospel*, it is "the mystery of godliness;" 1 Tim. iii. 16; "the doctrine which is according to godliness." 1 Tim. vi. 3. The doctrine of the gospel is not speculative merely; it is also transforming and practical. It is not only the instrument of enlightening the mind, but also of renovating the will, and of rectifying the affections of the soul. In the hand of the Holy Spirit, it is a fire which penetrates, warms, softens, quickens, purifies and comforts the heart. It is a light which assimilates, (2 Cor. iii. 18,) and truth which sanctifies. (John xvii. 17.) It is also "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which, by making believers free from the law of sin and death," brings them "under the law to Christ." (1 Cor. ix. 21.) The design too of the *ordinances* of the gospel is, That sinners may be converted to the love and practice of holiness; and that saints may be enabled "to abound more and more in every

good word and work." This is the design likewise of all *providential dispensations* to the children of God. If they be favored with prosperity, it is that the goodness of God may constrain them to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance;" or, if they be visited with adversity, it is "that they may yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them." (Heb. xii. 11.)

4. It is indispensably requisite that believers perform good works, as *expressions of gratitude* to their God and Savior, for all his inestimable benefits vouchsafed to them. They are bound to be always grateful and thankful to the Lord, for his great goodness to them, in creation, in providence, and especially in redemption. It is "he who has made them, and not they themselves. He has preserved them amidst innumerable dangers, and has liberally supplied their various wants. He has distinguished them from all others of the sons of men, by the greatness of their privileges, and the inestimable value of their enjoyments; by the innumerable instances of his kindness, and the rich abundance of his favors. He has also, in the immensity of his love, sent his only begotten Son to redeem them to himself by his blood, and to merit for them the full and endless fruition of Himself, in the mansions of bliss. Moreover, he has sent his Holy Spirit to dwell in them, to apply redemption to them, and by his sanctifying and comforting influences to prepare them for every good work, and to advance them to the full enjoyment of eternal life. How boundless, then, how inexpressible, is the debt of adoring gratitude which they owe to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit! Now, what does the Lord require of them in return for all his benefits? Nothing but that they should "be ready to every good work," and be "zealous for good works." Having been bought with a price of infinite value, they are no more their own, but are indispensably bound "to glorify God in their body, and in their spirit, which are his," by a spiritual, universal, and cheerful obedience to Him. It is the will of their sovereign Benefactor, that they express their gratitude to Him for the inestimable blessings of his grace, by taking *pleasure* in keeping all his commandments, and by showing themselves "*patterns of good works.*" (Tit. ii. 7.)

5. Good works are no less necessary, as they are *our walking in the way* which leads to heaven. Jesus Christ "is the way." (John xiv. 6.) Faith and holiness are, our walking in him as the way. This way, accordingly, is called, "The way of

holiness, *or*, The holy way;" (Isa. xxxv. 8;) inasmuch as none can walk in Christ otherwise than by faith, and by that holiness of heart and life, which is "the obedience of faith." As no man can arrive at heaven but by Christ, so "without holiness," or walking in Him, "no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii. 14.) None is in the way to heaven but he who, by a life of faith, and the practice of those good works which are the fruits of faith, is advancing toward perfection of holiness. It is the order immutably fixed in the everlasting covenant, That a man be made holy in heart and in life, before he be admitted to see and enjoy God in his holy place on high.—The love and practice of good works, then, in one who has an opportunity of performing them, are necessary, as *appointed means* of disposing or preparing him for the holy enjoyments and employments of the heavenly sanctuary. The redeemed, therefore, who are in the way to the celestial city are "zealous for good works," and "fruitful in every good work." (Col. i. 10.)

6. They are also indispensably requisite, in order to *evidence and confirm the faith* of the saints. Wherever a living and a saving faith is, good works are, in every adult believer; the native fruits are proper *evidences* of it. "Show me," says the apostle James, "thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith *by* my works." (James ii. 18.") Sincere obedience is the necessary consequence, and therefore a necessary evidence, of justifying and saving faith. Good works are "works of faith," works performed in faith, and proceeding from it as the living principle of them. Whatever seeming evidences of true faith, then, a man may have, they are all to be regarded as counterfeit and delusive, if he do not, at the same time, love and practise good works. Such works do not only evidence a living faith, but they also *encourage* the believer resolutely to persevere in renewing his exercise of faith; and so, they prove the means of *confirming* his faith.

7. Good works are necessary to believers for making *their calling and election sure to them*. Although such works afford a man no right to eternal salvation, yet they are an infallible proof to him that he has a personal interest in it and a sure title to it. They, under the witnessing of the Holy Spirit, supply the believer with arguments, which, not only serve to confirm his assurance of faith, but to increase his assurance of personal interest in Christ and his great salvation. "Hereby we do know that we know him," says the beloved disci-

ple, "if we keep his commandments." "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." (John ii. 3, 5.) To the same purpose the apostle Peter says, "Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." (2 Pet. i. 5—7. 10.) Without the diligent performance of good works, no believer can attain assurance of his personal interest in eternal salvation, far less, establishment in that assurance.

8. Good works are indispensably requisite for the *maintenance or continuance* of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.— Though such works are not procuring causes of spiritual peace and joy; yet, as fruits of righteousness imputed, and fruits of faith, they always accompany that peace and joy, which issue from the lively exercise of faith. (Psal. cxix. 165. 2 Cor. i. 12.) The consolation which flows from the vigorous exercise of an appropriating faith, and from cheering discoveries of personal interest in the covenant of grace, cannot be retained, without unwearied diligence in the exercise of spiritual graces, and in the performance of good works. If believers would know by experience that "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace;" (Prov. iii. 17.) and if they would enjoy a continued sense of redeeming love, and a sweet foretaste of heavenly felicity, they must be habitually careful, not only to maintain but to be rich in good works.

9. Good works are no less needful, in order to *adorn the doctrine* of God our Saviour, and *our profession* of that holy and heavenly doctrine. The apostle Paul gave this charge to Titus, "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." (Tit. ii. 9, 10.) Believers cannot otherwise be a credit to the gospel and to their holy profession of it, than by a cheerful and diligent performance of every good work. It is only by the love and practice of universal holiness, that they can strike a conviction of the holiness, excellence and efficacy, of the gospel of God our Saviour on the

consciences of sinners around them. No other practice than that of good works in all their variety becomes the gospel of Christ. It is only "the beauty of holiness," that is suitable and ornamental to his glorious gospel. If believers then would not afford occasion to the enemies of the Lord Jesus, to blaspheme his glorious name, to speak evil of the way of truth, and to conclude that, all who profess faith and holiness, are hypocrites and imposters, they must "diligently follow every good work." "If, while men seek to be justified by Christ, they themselves also are found sinners;" this reflects much dishonor upon our great Redeemer, and makes "Him the minister of sin." (Gal. ii. 17.)

10. Good works are also requisite to *stop the mouths* of wicked men, and to *prevent offence*. "For so is the *will* of God," says an Apostle, "that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." (1 Pet. i. 15.) They are necessary likewise to gain over unbelievers, and other enemies of the truth, and to recommend faith and holiness to their esteem. It is by the faithful and cheerful performance of every good work, that believers commend the Lord Jesus, and the way of truth and holiness to the consciences of all around them.

11. They are necessary, moreover, for the *edification and comfort* of fellow Christians. Our blessed Lord, therefore, gives his disciples this high command; "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matth. v. 16.) And the apostle Paul informed the believers at Corinth, That their zeal, in contributing readily and seasonably, for the poor saints at Jerusalem "had provoked very many." (2 Cor. ix. 2.) The same apostle informs us that the doctrines of grace, and the good works to which they tend, "are good and profitable unto men." (Tit. iii. 8.) Such works are highly necessary, not only for the edification and comfort of individual believers, but also for the peace, security and glory of the church.

12. Finally, good works are indispensably requisite, for *promoting before the world, the manifested glory* of Christ, and of God in him. The apostle Paul prayed for the believers at Phillippi, "That they might be sincere, and without offence, till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Philip. i. 10, 11.) The Lord Jesus said to his dis-

ciples, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." (John xv. 8.) Believers then must endeavour, "whatever they do, to do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. x. 31.)—To this purpose it is requisite, "that they care for the things of the Lord, that they may be holy both in body and spirit, diligently following every good work;" (1 Cor. vii. 34.) and "that they follow not that which is evil, but that which is good." (3 John ver. 11.)

These appear to be the leading purposes for which good works are necessary; and so indispensably requisite are they to subserve those designs; that, according to the order unalterably fixed in the covenant of grace, it will be *impossible* for the latter to be attained, without the former. Though good works, as has been observed, are not necessary out of their proper place; yet, *in* the place assigned to them, and *for* the purposes intended to be served by them, they are absolutely indispensable. No man can warrantably conclude that he is instated in the covenant of grace, except he find, that he is disposed and enabled daily to perform them.

VAIN THOUGHTS.

Swarms of vain thoughts may be reckoned among the first and most constant enemies of the servant of God. The mind of man is like a fountain which is continually sending forth streams. There is not a moment of our waking time when the rational soul is entirely quiescent. How it may be in our sleeping hours, this is not the place to inquire, further than to remark that sin may be committed in sleep; for there is often a deliberate choice of evil after a struggle between a sense of duty and an inclination to sin. And often the same vain and impure thoughts which were too much indulged in waking hours, infest us when asleep, and may find much readier entertainment than when we have all our senses about us. It is difficult indeed, to say when moral agency is suspended, so as to render the person inculpable for his volitions; and many know that they consent to temptations in sleep, when they abhor the evil as soon as they are awake. And in other cases inclination is indulged, where there is not the least sense of the moral turpitude of the act. But in other cases, persons in sleep consent to sin, with a clear apprehen-

sion of the evil of the thing to which they consent ; here there must be some guilt ; for if there was not an evil nature prone to iniquity, such volitions would not take place. Two things we should do, first, to avoid evil thoughts and such pampering of the body as have a tendency to pollute our dreams ; and secondly, to pray to God to preserve us from evil thoughts even in sleep. Particularly we should pray to be delivered from the influence of Satan during our sleeping hours. Mr. Andrew Baxter, in his work on the soul, is of opinion that dreams can in no way be accounted for, but by the agency of other spirits acting on ours. While I do not adopt this theory of dreaming, I am inclined to believe, that some how or other, both good and evil spirits have access to our minds in sleep. They actually seem to hold conversation with us, and suggest things of which we had never tho't before. To return from this digression—it may be safely asserted that no human mind, in this world, is free from the incursion of vain thoughts. The proportion of such thoughts depends on the circumstances of the individual, and the degree of spirituality and self-government to which he has attained. The question very naturally arises here, is the mere occurrence of vain or wicked thoughts sinful? This is a nice question in casuistry, and should not be answered inconsiderately. It is said in Scripture, “the thought of wickedness is sin ;” but by thought, in this place, we should probably understand “intention.” The wise man would teach that sin may be committed in the mind without any external act ; a doctrine abundantly taught in other parts of Holy Writ. Or, we may understand it to mean, that when tho'ts of evil are entertained and cherished in the mind, there is sin. Thoughts may not in themselves be sinful, and yet they may become so if they fill and occupy the mind to the exclusion of better thoughts. Ideas of present scenes and passing transactions, are not in themselves sinful, because necessary, and often required by the duties which we have to perform ; but if the current of these thoughts is so continuous that they leave no room for spiritual meditations, they become sinful by their excess. Again, as every Christian has set times for prayer, and other devotional exercises, if the mind on such occasions, wanders off from the contemplation of those objects which should occupy it, such forgetfulness of God's presence, and vain wandering of the thoughts is evidently sinful. And here is an arena on which many a severe conflict

has been undergone, and where, alas, many overthrows have been experienced by the sincere worshipper of God. How our *Perfectionists* dispose of this matter, and what their experience is, I know not. I suppose, however, that they are at best, no more exempt from wandering thoughts than others ; and if so, they must practice a double hypocrisy, first of persuading themselves that there is no sin in all this ;—and secondly in denying, or concealing from others their real experience on this subject. But is it not true, that from the very laws of association of ideas, there will often be an involuntary wandering of the thoughts ? This is admitted and it is conceded also, that it may be impossible in all cases to determine with precision, which of our straying thoughts contracts guilt, and how much blame attaches to us, when our thoughts suddenly start aside from the mark like a deceitful bow. There are, however, some plain principles, which sound casuistry can establish. If when the thoughts thus start aside, they are not immediately recalled, then there is sin ; for the mind has this power over its thoughts, and when it is not exercised, it argues negligence, or something worse. Again, if this deviation of our thoughts would have been prevented by a solemn sense of the divine presence and omniscience, then it is sinful ; for such impressions should accompany us to the throne of grace. And finally, if the true reason of these erratic trains of thought, at such seasons, is owing to a secret aversion to spiritual things, and a preference at the moment, to some carnal or selfish indulgence, then indeed, there is not only sin, but sin of enormous guilt. It is the direct acting of enmity against God. There are many, it is to be feared, who take little or no account of their thoughts ; and who, if they run through the external round of duties, feel satisfied. Multitudes are willing to be religious, and even punctilious in duty, if no demand is made upon them for fixedness of attention, and fervency and elevation of affection. The carnal mind hates nothing so much as a spiritual approach to God, and the remainder of this enmity in the pious is the very “law in their members which wars against the law of the mind.” This is the very core of their inbred sin, from which all evil thoughts proceed, on account of which they need to be humbled in the dust, every day they live. There is much reason to fear however, that many who appear to be serious Christians are not at all in the habit of watching their thoughts, and ascertaining the

evil that is in them. I knew a person, nearly half a century ago, who being greatly troubled with wandering thoughts in times of devotion, was solicitous to know whether any other person was troubled in the same way, and to the same degree with such swarms of vain thoughts. He carefully wrote down what he experienced in this way, and then took it to two serious professors, of whose piety he had a good opinion, and without intimating that it was his own experience, inquired whether they were acquainted with any thing like this. They both acknowledged that they were often interrupted with wandering thoughts in prayer; but in the degree described in the paper they were not, and could not believe that any real Christian was. There may be, and no doubt is, a constitutional difference in regard to this matter. In some minds the links of association are so strong that when a particular idea is suggested, the whole train must come along, and thus the object previously before the mind is lost sight of, and will not be recovered without a resolute effort.

An old writer says, "what busy flies were to the sacrifices on the altar, such are vain thoughts to our *holy services*;—their continued buzzing disturbs the mind, and distracts its devotion." Bernard complained much of these crowds of vain thoughts; he said—"Intræunt et exeunt," they pass and and re-pass, come in and go out, and will not be controlled. "Amovere volo, nec valeo," I would fain remove them, but cannot. This is in perfect accordance with Paul's experience, "when I would do good, evil is present with me." And Chrysostom says, "that nothing is more dreadful to the godly than sin." "*This is death—this is hell.*" Therefore, though nothing amiss be discerned by man, yet is he afflicted, deeply afflicted, on account of his rebellious thoughts, which being in the secret closet of the heart, can only appear unto God.

The old writer, before mentioned, introduces a struggling soul, mourning on this account. "O the perplexing trouble of my distracting thoughts! How do they continually disturb the quiet of my mind, and make my holy duties become a weariness of my soul? They cool the heart, they damp the vigor, they deaden the comfort of my devotions. Even when I pray to God to forgive my sins, I then sin whilst I am praying for forgiveness; yea, whether it be in the church or in the closet, so frequently and so violently do these thoughts withdraw my heart from God's service, that I cannot have

There has been a change in
order to visit Japan with
five men - five more



confidence he hears my suit, because I know by experience I do not hear myself ; surely therefore, God must needs be far off from my prayer, whilst my heart is so far out of his presence, hurried away with a crowd of vain imaginations." To whom he applies the following consolations. 1. "These vain thoughts being thy burden shall not be thy ruin ; and though they do take from the sweetness, they shall not take from the sincerity of thy devotions. 2. It is no little glory which we give to God in the acknowledgment of his omnipresence and omniscience, that we acknowledge him to be privy to the first risings of our most inward thoughts. 3. It is much the experience of God's children, even the devoutest saints, that their thoughts of God and of Christ, of heaven and holiness, are very unsteady and fleeting. Like the sight of a star through an optic glass, held by a palsy hand, such is our view of divine objects. 4. Know thou hast the gracious mediation of an all-sufficient Saviour to supply thy defects, and procure an acceptance of thy sincere, though imperfect devotions. 5. As thou hast the gracious mediation of an all-sufficient Saviour to supply thy defects, so hast thou the strengthening power of his Holy Spirit to help thine infirmities ; which strength is made perfect in weakness.— When thou are emptied, it shall fill thee ; when thou art stumbled, it shall raise thee. The experience of God's saints will tell thee, that they have long languished under this cross of *vain thoughts* ; yet after long conflict have obtained a joyful conquest, and from mourning doves have become mounting eagles.

DR. ALEXANDER.

POPISH AURICULAR CONFESSION.

From the Christian Intelligencer.

The "Signs of the Times," in many respects are truly ominous. That Babylon the Great will be utterly destroyed, is the declaration of Him who is "faithful and true, and his name is called the word of God ;" but that the wondrous catastrophe will be preceded by the most appalling convulsions is also not less emphatically predicted. All that is truly of the Christian Church, will abandon the Papal "mystery of iniquity," and thereby escape a portion of its last plagues.— But one truth seems not to be duly applied by Protestants—

which is this :—that all the Churches and every nation will feel the scorching wrath of the fire in which that city will be consumed, in exact proportion as they have been participants in her nefarious merchandize, or have been bewitched by her sorceries, and intoxicated with the wine of her abominations.

An Essay on Auricular Confession, having been lately perused by me, I thought that a concise summary of its contents, with some remarks from it, would not be unseasonable. The writer affirms these propositions in proof that Auricular Confession is morally pernicious.

1. *Auricular confession of necessity debases the human mind.*—
2. *Auricular confession necessarily corrupts the morals of society.*
3. *That practice places a vast amount of wealth at the disposal of the priesthood.*

Upon the former positions, I shall make but two quotations. “Who can contemplate the practice in *the nature of the thing*, without recoiling from it with indignation? The mind placed under the keeping of a fellow being, who probes every feeling, knows every thought, crushes every emotion that tends to the emancipation of the soul!—the mind forced into an iron mould, and there held by a priest! Maidens unbooming themselves in secret to unmarried men; to men forced to celibacy—who are trained up from childhood for the priesthood, as a respectable livelihood! Married women exhibiting the inmost recesses of their hearts to strange men! Is not this unspeakable iniquity?”

“O ! tis such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty ;
Calls virtue hypocrite ; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there ; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers’ oaths. O ! such a deed
As from the body of contraction, plucks
The very soul ; and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words !”

“Every moment of time spent in meditation upon sin, increases the power of the dangerous object which has possessed our imagination : who then can doubt that the situation of the priest, who listens to details of guilty passion, is dangerous to virtue!—The true way to preserve purity of heart, is to avoid temptation ; and the Lord himself has taught us daily to pray not to be led into temptation : hence, Auricular Confession cannot





fail to be a frightful source of demoralization. It is a *withering pestilence—ever fatal to dignity of mind, female purity, and domestic peace.*”

Under the third of the preceding propositions, the author adverts to Auricular Confession, in its *social and political relations*.

Blunt, in his History of the Reformation, gives the ensuing description of the facility which Auricular Confession furnishes the priest to pry into every person's affairs. “*A death-bed was a friar's harvest. The Confessional was his exchequer. Was the man refractory? The friar had the art of reaching the family purse by means of the wife.*” That filching system is just as much practised now as formerly—only with more secrecy in the working of that iniquity.

“Auricular Confession is dangerous to public liberty, and to the political prosperity of the commonwealth. John Rogers, the first martyr under the Bloody Mary's ferocious sway, thus denounced it: “Auricular Confession has been a national evil, a public calamity, a dark, threatening, and ill-tending demon, hovering over the length and breadth of the land. The cursed counsel of the Confessor poisons the ear, hardens the heart, and urges the hand of those in power to tyranny, and persecution, and blood.” All Romish Priestly Confessors are the servants of a *foreigner!*—sworn to unquestioning *obedience* to the Pope, and dare not refuse to obey any orders, however wicked, of their ecclesiastical superiors.—The Confessor is a *spy* in every house! *The spy of an Italian despot*, from the splendid mansion to the mud cottage. The power of questioning is given to the Confessor, and *no law can regulate a power exercised in secret.* The Priest will ask whatever his interest, his whim, his ambition, his avarice and his lusts suggest, and who dares to refuse the answer? All history proves that the Confessional places the lives and liberties of its devotees at the disposal of the vassals of the Popedom.

“It demands our notice, that the great Reformer first was stirred against the corruptions of the Papacy, by the traffic in indulgences, which he regarded as a violation of the sanctity of the Confessional. Tetzel offered for sale indulgences absolving the purchasers from all pains and penalties of the greatest possible sins, and of even impossible iniquity. Luther regarded that diabolical traffic with indignation; and meditated upon the corruptions which he had witnessed du-

ring his visit at Rome. He opened his bible, and then published the living truth, justification by faith in Christ! Like Samuel, he had mistaken the voice of the Lord, and had repaired to the High Priest of Babylon; but he returned to his place, having received a special and superior commission from Jehovah himself. The gospel truth announced by Luther clave down the impieties of Pope Leo X. and annihilated the usurped power of the Confessional; scattering to the winds, absolutions, indulgences, and supererogation, with all their other "lies in hypocrisy, and feigned words with which, through covetousness, they made merchandize of the souls of men" 2 Pet. ii. 1. Christ was restored to the pedestal in the Temple of God, from which he had been dethroned. The priest was no longer the mediator between God and the people.—The pardons vended by him were valueless, for the awakened world heard, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." They were invited to go to Him who will in no wise cast out; and without money, and without price, were directed to wash at the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and be whole.

"Blessed be God for this glorious truth! In it we shall find the antagonist of that hideous system of ecclesiastical despotism, Auricular Confession, which is, in fact, the accursed Inquisition, only without its dungeons, and tortures, and burnings. Blessed be God for raising up Martin Luther to proclaim it. It may be that we are destined to see "*the beast*" start from the ground, as light as if he felt no wound, and shout victory—but anon he will reel and stagger. The crimson tide bursts from his side, where the arm of Luther planted the deadly wound.

RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF IRELAND.

"The religious state of the Roman Catholic population of Ireland in its leading features, may still be described as '*semper eadem*'—always the same, with but slight modifications. There is the same debasing subjection to human authority, the same pervading ignorance of the holy scriptures, the same hostility to those who are without their own pale, the same prominence and encouragement given to tenets and ceremonies which are destructive to the simplicity that is in Christ, and pernicious to the best interests of man.

The character of the hierarchy may be considered as descriptive of that of the priesthood in general, where you have all the intermediate varieties between the mildness of Murray, and the haughty arrogance of John, Archbishop of Tuam, but a most united determination to resist all encroachments on *mother church*. There is an increasing vigilance to prevent the diffusion of the truth, and an increasing assiduity to gain converts to Rome.

The established church of Ireland includes the next great portion of professing christians; and great as the change has been in the Episcopal church in England, it is exceeded by that which has taken place in this country. Instead of lamentable ignorance of leading theological truths, and great indifference in the discharge of their clerical functions, many of the ministers of this community have become enlightened and laborious; adopting without scruple, wherever practicable, the forms and measures previously peculiar to Dissenters; engaging in missions to instruct and stimulate their own people, and to diffuse the light and the truth of the gospel. The candidates for the ministry are superior to those of former and not distant times, but they are incumbered and weakened by millenarian speculations, and counteracted by the idea of apostolic succession, preparing the way for the insidious progress of the more than semi-popish tenets of the Oxford theology.

One distinct leading feature is the growing alienation of the evangelical clergy from their dissenting brethren. This may be attributed to the revival and diffusion of high church doctrines, and to the collision incident to the strife of political parties in England.

The Presbyterian body is well known to comprise a number of ministers and churches of Arian and Socinian tenets, with whom the orthodox portion was long accustomed too closely to coalesce. A separation has taken place, which is becoming more extensive and strongly marked; Presbyterian churches have been raised in the south where none existed, and separate interests have been formed in some towns where existing ones were known to be decidedly heterodox; the tone of piety has become more deep and elevated, while corresponding zeal and activity are apparent. These churches, whether orthodox or otherwise, receive considerable support from the state, by an annual parliamentary grant, entitled the *Regium Donum*.

The Wesleyan Methodists are divided into two parties, having scarcely any other distinctive feature, than, in the one, a rigid adherence to the communion-table and baptismal service of the established church, and, in the other, greater allowance of liberty in these respects. They differ in nothing from the English portions, except in the increase of self-denying labor, greater itinerant privations, more formidable obstacles to encounter, and the greater need of the exercise of faith and patience as they fulfil their ministry. To them must be assigned the distinction of having preserved numbers from conforming to the Romish faith, and of having labored indefatigably during a long period of indolence on the part of a wealthy establishment; they, too, are preparing for the more vigorous prosecution of their work, encouraged and aided by their centenary contributions.

The congregational churches, as divided into Independents and Baptists, next claim attention. Except in some of the large cities and towns, as Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Sligo, these are either wholly or partially under the fostering care of the societies supported by their respective denominations, with exclusive reference to Ireland's welfare: for a lengthened period they must be thus or similarly sustained.

Protestant dissent has every adverse element to encounter; and it was not inaptly observed by an English minister, at the close of a tour in this country, "It must be the praise of our brethren that they have labored and not fainted." Their labors are essentially missionary; and though not associated with many of the dangers and privations which attend missions to the heathen, are, it is conceived, of a much more depressing character. The heathen appear more accessible: they have not the suspicion and the prejudice of the Irish Roman Catholic, nor are they surrounded by the nameless jealousies and hindrances which here encompass the dissenting teacher, be his spirit as inoffensive and as candid as it may; like their brethren, in distant lands, they labor, for the most part, alone: to the interchange of service, to the friendly converse that brightens and sharpens, to associated prayer and counsel, they are comparative strangers; they have not the resources on which to fall back in time of need, that sustain their English brethren.

Yet, while the condition of the majority presents these claims on the sympathy and prayers of their friends and brethren in more favored circumstances, a comparison of the present with the past is sufficient to encourage in a course of patient perseverance. The expenditure, the toil, the privations, and the severe exercises of mind, which must accompany evangelical labor in Ireland, have not been unproductive. On many a benighted district has shone the light of life; it has penetrated the cabins of the peasantry, awakened the spirit of religious inquiry in the mind, which Popery appeared to have hermetically sealed, conducted the trembling soul to Christ as the *only* refuge, and illumined with peaceful rays the departing spirit, as religion consummated its glorious work."—*Eng. Mag.*

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD IN IRELAND.

Contrary to our expectations, we are still without any official accounts of the proceedings of this court at its late sessions. From the Belfast Newsletter and the Northern Whig, also published in Belfast, we gather the following intelligence, which we presume may be regarded as substantially correct. It appeared that a sufficient number of copies of the new Scottish Testimony had not been received in time to secure the examination of the document by the inferior courts, and consequently the consideration thereof by Synod was deferred till next meeting. Dr. Henry moved that the Terms of communion and the

Formula of questions for ordination as they are used by the Scottish Synod, be sent down to the inferior judicatories of the church in Ireland for investigation with a view to their adoption. This motion was the same that had been rejected by Synod last year, and gave rise again to a lengthened and animated discussion. Mr. Dick moved as an amendment, that Synod strictly adhere to its decision last year, on this motion, and in relation to holding *in retentis* certain papers then and now lying on Synod's table. The amendment proposed by Mr. Dick was carried by a large majority. Against this decision Dr. Paul and others entered their dissent. The Board of Directors of Synod's Missions presented a long and interesting report, which was considered highly satisfactory, and shewed, besides former missionary stations continuing to prosper, several new ones that are promising. The Rev. William Sommerville from the British Provinces in North America was present and gave a detailed account of his missionary operations, which is spoken of in the highest terms. Every member of Synod is said to have participated in an expression of the gratification which had been felt at the statements made. Three students of Theology, Messrs. Stewart Fullerton, Wm. McDowell and Robert Nevin were examined on the different branches of Collegiate study and Theology, with a view to licensure. The examination of each was sustained and they were recommended to be taken on trial for licensure by the Northern Presbytery, under whose care they had been.

Touching the act of giving in their Declinature by members of the Eastern Presbytery, we find little to add to the statement given in our last No. But of the "Declinature" itself and the subsequent action of Synod we could not then speak, not having seen them. As to the "Declinature," it is a very long and labored paper, written chiefly in what we regard as an exceedingly bad spirit. More than four-fifths of the whole Document is occupied in stating, reasoning, and declaiming against errors alleged to be taught in the Covenanter and other writings of the Rev. Thomas Houston. Sixteen specifications are given, with extracts from these writings to make out the specifications. In our judgment, this whole part of the Document, taken as a whole, is an utter misrepresentation of the doctrines maintained by Mr. Houston in the writings from which the extracts are taken. It also contains repeated appeals to the worst passions of Papists and other heretics, calculated to inflame these passions against a covenanted Testimony and the Witnesses who maintain it. The declining members charge the Synod with having identified themselves with the alleged errors by their refusal to condemn them, and on this, found their first reason of declinature. The other reasons are thus briefly stated in the Belfast Newsletter:—"That the Synod would not violate its own arrangement made last year, and reaffirmed at the present meeting—that papers which would necessarily lead to dissention, should be held *in retentis* till order should be taken on the Scottish testimony—that Synod would postpone the controversy on an important subject to an indefinite period—and that the Synod had acted unjustly and in a disorderly man-

ner. After the reading of the declinature, which was done by Rev. C. Houston, he having asked and obtained leave to make a communication, the signers thereof withdrew from the house. The Synod afterwards appointed a committee, Messrs. Watt, Cameron and S. Carlisle, to wait on the separating brethren, to require them to return to their duty and to their place in Synod; and, in case they refused, to require from the Rev. C. Houston the records of Synod. The committee reported that they had been unsuccessful, except that Mr. Houston had promised to give up the records. Another committee,—Messrs. Watt and Stavely, of the Northern Presbytery—Graham and Cathcart, of the Southern Presbytery—and Brittin and Stott, of the Western Presbytery, were appointed to confer with the separating brethren—to correspond with the Scottish Synod, and to vindicate the character and proceedings of Synod, in case of attacks, till next meeting of Synod. A special day of fasting and humiliation because of the event was appointed, and a resolution passed to the effect that Synod disclaimed any error, calumny or misrepresentation, *if any such there be*, found in the writings of any who are or have been members thereof.

GREAT BRITAIN AND CHINA.

The following remarks, from the New-York Observer, touching the war which Great Britain is waging upon China, deserve the attention of all enlightened, moral men. The attempt to enforce upon a pagan people, or any people, an article of trade which tends greatly to their injury, is necessarily unjust; and when, as in the present case, moral wretchedness and degradation, not to speak of physical evils, are the native and necessary tendency of such an attempt, it should be regarded by every friend of virtue and morality as base in the extreme. What a spectacle does Britain at this moment present to the civilized world? A great nation, professing to be under the benign influence of christianity, waging war upon a benighted heathen empire, for no other purpose than to force upon the inhabitants a destructive article which for many years has spread desolation and wretchedness among them to an awful extent!—Ed.

“In the speech of the Queen of England to be found in another column, she speaks of the injuries that have been inflicted on her subjects by the officers of the Emperor of China, that have compelled her to ‘send a naval and military force to demand reparation and redress.’—To say nothing of the exceeding inconsistency of such an assertion, from the lips of her most Christian Majesty! the head of the church!! we humbly submit whether such language is not an insult to the intelligence of the civilized world.

The English traders carry a vile poisonous drug to a foreign port.—Its introduction is prohibited under the penalty of death. The traders

Extraordinary Fatality of the House of Stuart.

are forbidden to land it and are warned again and again that their attempts to force the article upon the people, will be resisted to the last extremity. The attempt is persisted in pertinaciously, and borne with by the Chinese, till forbearance has long ceased to be a virtue. Difficulties arise in the controversy and the majesty of imperial England is insulted by the obstinacy of Commissioner Lin. Fleets and armies are sent out, at an expense of millions drawn from an overtaxed and oppressed people, and the Sovereign gravely tells the world that she is "compelled" to this deed of violence and inhumanity that has already made Christendom blush for the honor of its religion.

It is often said that, in this age, a nation before going to war, must take care that the opinion of the world will justify the necessity. In that *opinion* there is more strength than in walls or ramparts. But the nation is yet to be discovered, that has ventured to approve or even extenuate the conduct of Great Britain towards China. The Christian world had been looking on the determination of the Chinese Government to banish Opium, as a part of the moral and wonderful history of the days in which we live. The aid of all Christian governments ought to be cheerfully extended to help on so remarkable and blessed an enterprise undertaken by a pagan people. Instead of this, the British Government, finding that her commerce must for a little season suffer, that her East India possessions where the Opium is raised will for a while be less productive, if this trade is suppressed, will force it upon the Chinese by the same mode of argument that was so effectual, when the French frigate dictated to the Sandwich Island king the terms on which he should admit into his dominion French priests, and French brandy. How the case is altered, by an alteration of latitude, we are too dull to discover.

This is a serious subject. It is one of those subjects which can be met only by the force of opinion. The laws of nations will not allow the interference of a third party in such a contest, and the British Government will therefore be permitted to cover itself with laurels in this unequal struggle, and we shall soon hear that this "naval and military force" which the Queen has been so reluctantly compelled to send out, has gained a splendid victory over Chinese war junks and hosts of undisciplined natives. The garlands of victory might well be made of *poppies*, that the weed that has supplied the occasion of the war, might also adorn the triumph with which it is closed."

EXTRAORDINARY, FATALITY OF THE HOUSE OF STUART.

The Royal line of the Stuarts is among the most unfortunate in the records of history. Their destiny followed them during the long period of 400 years.

Robert III. King of Scotland, died of a broken heart, occasioned by his son, Robert, having been starved to death, and his youngest son, James, being made a prisoner.

James I. his son, was taken prisoner by the English, and remained in confinement eighteen years. On his return to Scotland, after having beheaded three of his nearest kindred, he was himself assassinated by his own relatives as a punishment.

James II. was killed by a cannon-shot at the siege of Roxburgh.

James III. succeeded his father, James II. He put to death his brother John, and would have destroyed his other brother, Alexander, but he escaped, and levied war against him. James was defeated in battle, and having fallen from his horse, took refuge in a mill, where he was discovered and put to death.

James IV. was slain in the fatal battle of Flodden Field.

James V. died of grief for the loss of his army at Solway Moss. He left his dominions to his only daughter, Mary Stuart, (better known as the unfortunate Mary, Queen of Scots,) who, after suffering eighteen years' imprisonment, was beheaded at Fotheringay Castle, Northamptonshire, on the 8th of February, 1587.

Henry Stuart, Earl of Darnley the husband of Mary, Queen of Scots, died the victim of revenge. His house in Edinburgh was blown up in the night by gunpowder, and the unfortunate monarch's body was found next day in a field adjoining.

Charles I. was beheaded; and finally his son James II. expelled, and with him the direct line of the Stuart was driven from the throne of Britain. The last of the direct line died a cardinal in Rome, under the title of Cardinal York.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The orthodox public are under great obligations to Mr. Robert Carter, 58 Canal-st. New-York, for re-publishing many Theological works, some of which are old and had become exceedingly scarce. Among others we notice, with the view of recommending, the following:

Symington on the Atonement.—This we consider the best treatise on this great subject which has been written in modern times, and rejoice to learn that a third American edition is likely soon to be called for.

Symington on the Dominion of Christ.—This work is by the same author, and in it he has fully sustained his character as an able and sound theologian, as well as a clear, forcible and beautiful writer. All should read it, who desire to see ably stated and vindicated the universal dominion of Jesus Christ as mediator, and his claims upon all men in all relations and stations to unlimited obedience according to the divine law.

Winslow on the Holy Spirit.—This is by an English divine, is evangelical throughout, and ably maintains the Divinity, distinct Personality, and Work of the third person in the Godhead. Its perusal has afforded us more than ordinary satisfaction.

The Dew of Israel, &c. or a Glimpse of the Kingdom of Grace.—This is a work by the Rev. Dr. Krummacher, favorably known by former writings. It is evangelical and distinguished by the tone of piety which pervades it.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

NOVEMBER, 1840.

No. IX.

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD OF SCOTLAND.

(From the Scottish Presbyterian.)

After the constitution of the Court by the Moderator, the roll of members was made up. The Rev. Thomas Martin, of Strathmiglo, was chosen Moderator.

A list of members was then submitted to the court and approved of, for conducting devotional exercises on the morning of every day of Synod's sitting, immediately after the constitution of the court. Several committees were then appointed, for arranging the business of the court, and the meeting was closed with prayer.

On Tuesday, a committee of Synod was appointed to collect the records of our Church from the earliest period, to classify and arrange them, to transcribe them in a fair and legible hand, and to report to the first meeting of Synod. Several members of court held out the prospect of an abundant supply of material in this respect, sufficient to stimulate the exertions and to reward the labors of the committee.

Calls to Mr. Brydon, from the congregations of Kelso and Eskdalemuir, were then taken up. The call from Kelso was signed by 84, out of 90 members on the communicant's roll, with 11 adherents. The stipend offered was £70, with an excellent house and garden, besides £4 annually for expenses. The call from Eskdalemuir was signed by 53, out of 70 members, with 27 adherents, offering £60 of stipend, independently of £10 per annum guaranteed to them by Synod for five years. The Commissioner also stated, that while

they could not offer a house at present, they would undoubtedly provide one as soon as a site for building was obtained. And while they promised only £60 per annum at present, they considered themselves morally bound to increase the stipend as soon as possible, and according to their ability.— Similar sentiments, as to the moral responsibility of congregations to give adequate support to their Ministers to the utmost of their ability, were expressed by the Commissioner from Kelso. Several members of court concurred in these remarks, and pressed upon the minds of the commissioners the moral obligations under which they lay, to increase the maintenance of their ministers to the utmost of their power.

Mr. Brydon expressed his satisfaction with the support which had been offered, believing that, as the congregations increased in numbers, they would not relax in their conscientious endeavors to make their minister comfortable; esteemed and loved his friends in Eskdalemuir; deplored doing any thing that would have the slightest tendency to discourage them; but considered that a stranger would have much more influence as a minister among them than he could possibly command, being born and educated among them; therefore he accepted of the call from Kelso.

The Committee on Bills and Overtures having arranged, that all cases which involved the attendance of numerous commissioners should be first disposed of, a reference from the Dumfries Presbytery, in the case of a call from Whithorn to the Rev. Thomas McIndoe, was submitted to the Synod.

The congregation of Whithorn had petitioned the Dumfries Presbytery for a moderation, and obtained it. On the day fixed for the moderation, Mr. McIndoe was nominated and chosen for their minister, by eighty-nine members out of about one hundred on the roll of communicants; fifty adherents also signing the call. At the first meeting of Presbytery after this, the moderating minister reported, and laid the call on the Presbytery's table. A petition from the congregation, praying that the call should be sustained, was read, and their commissioners heard in support of its prayer. The Presbytery approved of the conduct of the moderating minister, but refused to sustain the call; because, first, they had no legal document before them as a court to show that Mr. McIndoe was loosed from his charge in Dundee. An interim act of Synod, passed in 1839, declared, that "no ordained

minister, having a charge, shall be put on the leet of candidates, in a vacant congregation, without the consent of Synod." The moderating minister had such evidence as convinced him of the propriety of allowing Mr. McIndoe's name to be put on the list of candidates; the Presbytery, on receiving his report, approved of his conduct, and thus far homologated his deed; but as they had no legal document before them, to prove that he was loosed from his charge, they were ignorant of it as a court, and as a court refused to sustain the call, referring the whole matter to the Synod. But this was not the main difficulty with the Presbytery. Injurious reports had been circulated, as to Mr. McIndoe's conduct, in breaking up his connection with Dundee, and in bringing about his new connection with Whithorn. It was said that he had entered into a correspondence with certain members of the Whithorn congregation, previously to the demitting of his charge in Dundee; and finding, that if he were free, a call would a third time come out for him—Whithorn had already called him twice—he used undue means to get rid of Dundee. This was the especial ground on which the Presbytery referred the matter to the Synod.

It came out in evidence before the Synod, that the crippled condition of the Dundee congregation, in pecuniary matters, had had an enervating and discouraging influence over both minister and people—that the Edinburgh Presbytery had done every thing in their power, by offering pecuniary support, and every other necessary aid, to keep up the connection betwixt the pastor and his flock till the meeting of Synod at least—that the relation was dissolved with the greatest reluctance by the Presbytery, and at the urgent entreaties of both Mr. McIndoe and the commissioners from the congregation—that Mr. McIndoe's correspondence with Whithorn was not the cause of his giving up Dundee, but that his resolution to demit his charge originated the correspondence in question—or rather, the correspondence commenced after the resolution to demit was formed, and communicated to his session and congregation. The Synod, therefore, sustained the call, and presented it to Mr. McIndoe. Mr. McIndoe accepted of the call.

On Wednesday, a protest and appeal, with reasons and answers, from the Stranraer congregation, against a decision of the Dumfries Presbytery, were laid on the table. The congregation had petitioned for a moderation. The Presby-

tery had reason to believe that they intended to put an ordained minister, having a charge in Ireland, on the leet of candidates. The commissioner from the congregation, on being questioned by the Presbytery, admitted that a deputation from the congregation of Stranraer had been sent to Ireland, but denied that the Stranraer congregation had come to any resolution in the matter. The Presbytery agreed to postpone the moderation, reminding the commissioner that the court would meet again in three weeks, when the congregation would have an opportunity of pressing their petition, and of removing the only difficulty which lay in the Presbytery's way, by assuring them that their object was eligible.

Parties were heard at great length. The Presbytery maintained that they had exercised the discretion vested in every church court, of granting, refusing, or otherwise disposing of all petitions to them—that it was universally reported that the congregation intended to put an ordained minister, having a charge in Ireland, on the leet—that the commissioner's statements did not tend to remove this impression, but that his admissions greatly confirmed them—that it was the duty of the congregation to satisfy the Presbytery on this point, and the right of the Presbytery to ask for satisfaction—that the Presbytery did not insist on knowing the object of their choice, but as report had declared their object to be ineligible, and as the commissioner's admissions had confirmed these reports, they exercised a sound discretion in postponing the moderation till assured that this was incorrect.

The commissioner, on the other hand, argued, that the congregation had a peculiar claim on the sympathy and the consideration of the Presbytery—that they asked no more than what was their right—that the Presbytery had no business with vague reports—that the congregation had done nothing to warrant the conclusion that their object was ineligible—that their object was eligible—and that it was the duty of the Presbytery to grant the prayer of their petition.

On the removal of the parties from the bar of the Synod, the case was taken up with ardor, and discussed with great animation. It was contended by some, that the Presbytery had overstepped their legitimate jurisdiction in postponing the moderation—that they had no right to inquire, of either the commissioner or congregation, who was the object of their choice—that this should ever be secret till the mod-

eration declared it—that the members of a congregation should speak more with God, and less with one another, as to the object of choice—that it was an undue interference with the freedom of election for even members to concuss one another into unanimity on this subject—a still greater interference with the rights of the christian people, for a Presbytery to suspend the granting of a moderation on the principles now stated—that even the moderating minister had no right to interfere—that it was his part to discharge the duty laid on him by the Presbytery: to preach, and to preside in the moderation, and afterwards to report to the Presbytery; but that it was the congregation's part to put on the leet of candidates whomsoever they pleased, no matter whom—that the presiding minister had no right to interfere—that he was to preserve order in conducting the prescribed duty, and report to the Presbytery—that it was the Presbytery alone that was to pronounce whether the person put upon the leet of candidates was eligible or not. It was, therefore, moved, that the protest and appeal be sustained, and that the decision of the Presbytery be reversed.

Other members of Synod affirmed, that the Presbytery had acted with great wisdom and prudence—that it was their duty to consider all the circumstances of the case, and to act as they saw cause—that the facts brought out before them were quite sufficient to justify them in postponing the moderation—that the fact of the deputation from the congregation to Ireland, coupled with the congregation's invitation to the ordained minister having a charge there, to come to Stranraer and preach to them, and his complying with this invitation, fully warranted the Presbytery in believing what was currently reported; namely, that it was intended to put an ineligible person on the leet of candidates—that it was the imperative duty of the Presbytery to arrest this evil *in limine*—that the preventive measures were always better than those of a curative nature—that it was unsound in principle, and dangerous in practice, to allow matters to proceed with the intention of checking them at some future stage—that the moderating minister was bound to do more than act as a mere reporter of the proceedings—that he was to see that no law was violated, either in spirit or in letter—that, as the Presbytery had a well-grounded fear that an attempt would be made to put an ordained minister, having a charge, on the leet of candidates, which was directly in the teeth of the interim law of Synod,

passed in 1839, upon the subject, they were bound to prevent the disorder which would have arisen in the congregation on the day of the moderation, if the presiding minister had refused to proceed, on the plea that the person nominated was ineligible—that cases of this nature had occurred, they had been checked on the day of moderation as proposed, and the worst consequences had been the result. . It was, therefore, moved, and carried by a very large majority, that the protest and appeal be dismissed, and that the proceedings of the Presbytery be sustained.

A petition was then presented to the Synod from about 300 out of 450 members of the Stranraer congregation, praying for liberty to place any preacher or minister on the leet of candidates, whether he resided in Scotland or in Ireland. A counter petition was also laid on the table from 78 members of the same congregation, praying that the law on this subject should not be altered.

The commissioners for the first petition declared, that the translation of ordained ministers was right—first, in filling up the chair of the professor of divinity—second, in the case of a minister's falling into bad health from the peculiar locality where he resided—and third, when a minister was not supported by his people; they admitted the principle of translation; the Synod had acted upon this principle; the petitioners craved that they might be allowed to act upon it; their petition was founded on it; the only peculiarity in their petition was, to place Ireland on the same platform with Scotland, and to permit them to put an ordained Minister on the leet of candidates from either country; every thing in sound principle pointed out the propriety of this—the young Irish students completed their theological curriculum under our professor—our pulpits were opened to them at all times—there was unconstrained reciprocity of ministerial and christian communion betwixt the two Synods; the petition prayed for justice at the hands of the Synod—even-handed justice;—eminent talents had been enjoyed by them in the ministry of a Douglas, a Cowan, and a Symington; and eminent talents were necessary in retaining the position to which they were raised; the aged and the grey-headed, left, by last year's decision, like sheep without a shepherd, prayed for justice; the youth of the congregation, the lambs of the flock, prayed for justice; they cast themselves on the kind

consideration of the Synod, humbly but earnestly demanding the prayer of their petition.

The commissioner for the counter petition recchoed its sentiments; admitted the principle of translation, but felt jealous of its abuse; considered the liberty which our congregations enjoyed at present sufficiently ample for every wise and valuable purpose; and concluded by urging the prayer of the Petition.

Parties being removed from the bar of the Synod, the subject was discussed with calmness, and judgment. All sympathised with the petitioners, respected their character, and expressed their utmost readiness to meet their views to the utmost of their power. There were two petitions; but they were one in sentiment, differing only in the application of the great principle of translation. Some contended, that the leet of candidates should be in all cases confined to the preachers of our church—that, while they admitted the principle of translation, it should never be acted on but on very extraordinary occasions. It was therefore moved, that the petition be rejected, and that the petitioners be recommended to hear the many excellent preachers now itinerating in our church, and choose a pastor from among them.

Others maintained, that preachers and ministers should ever be considered as eligible—that this principle should be regarded by our congregations, as applying alike to Scotland, and to Ireland, and to America—that this was the law previously to the passing of the interim act of 1839—that this act should be rescinded, which would be a granting of the prayer of the petition—that to refuse the petition was to raise up a barrier betwixt the Synods of Scotland and Ireland—that the Scotch and Irish preachers were upon a perfect equality in all respects—that nothing should be done to produce alienation of feeling betwixt them. It was therefore moved, that the Interim Law of 1839, which declared that no minister having a charge be put on the leet of candidates, be rescinded, so that ministers and preachers, in either Scotland or Ireland, may be put upon the leet of candidates, according to the will of the people.

An amendment was made to this last motion. The interim law of 1839 was an unwarrantable interference with the rights of the people, inconsistent with the practice of our church during the second reformation, and subversive of the principle of translation, which was acknowledged by all to

be scriptural and correct, whatever diversity of sentiment might exist as to the extent of its application. But, in rescinding this Interim Law, it did not follow that any minister was eligible. This was not the recognised principle before the passing of this law : the principle applied to Scotland alone, and not to the Irish or American Synod. The object of the amendment, therefore, was, to rescind the Interim Law of 1839, as proposed by the mover, but to restrict the eligibility of ministers and preachers to Scotland. The motion, as explained, by the mover, extended the eligibility to the Irish and American synods ; the amendment to this motion restricted the eligibility to Scotland. This would place the law on the same footing as it was before the passing of the Interim Law of 1839 ; it would meet the views of the petitioners, as far as the Synod had the power of doing so. The Synod had proposed to equalize the time and curriculum of study between the Scotch and Irish students, so that Irish preachers might occupy the same platform as did the Scottish preachers, but this was not carried into effect. The synod had declared that this step was absolutely necessary, ere our young men in Ireland could be eligible as ministers to our Scottish pulpits ; this declaration had been practically disregarded by our Irish brethren ; and the Synod had not the power to enforce compliance with this law. The amendment would extend the leet of candidates as far as the jurisdiction of the synod extended. No reasonable person could ask for more, though the petitioners prayed for much more ; but in doing so, they asked for what the synod had not the power to grant. The petitioners prayed for liberty to put ordained ministers on the leet of candidates, and even to cross the channel in fixing on the object of their choice. This was much more than had ever been asked by any congregation, and much more than had ever been granted by our Synod, and much more than the even-handed justice warranted for which the petitioners so earnestly plead.

This amendment was carried by a very large majority.

The amendment being carried was then put to the vote with the first motion. The amendment was, to rescind the Interim Law of 1839, restricting the leet of candidates to the ministers and the preachers of Scotland. The first motion was, to restrict the leet of candidates to the preachers of Scotland. This first vote was carried by the casting vote of the Moderator.

The commissioners to the first petition here laid two papers on the table, one declining the synod's authority, and the other an extract from the minutes of the congregation, empowering them to take this step, if the prayer of their petition was not fully granted.

Several members of the court were deputed to speak with the commissioners, on the step which they had now taken.

On Thursday morning, the members deputed to speak with the Stranraer Commissioners reported, that they had met with them, that the commissioners had refused to withdraw their declinature, but that they had promised to recommend to the congregation the propriety of reconsidering the matter.

The synod then appointed three of their number to visit the congregation, to converse with them, to explain the principles on which the prayer of their petition was refused, and to press on them the necessity of adhering to Presbyterian order and government, to which they professed their attachment.

On Friday, a very interesting paper was read by a member of court, on the Elective Franchise. It has been a difficulty with some members in several of our congregations whether or not they should qualify and vote in the election of council men, or of members of parliament. No diversity of sentiment existed upon this subject in the synod. But, as considerable doubt about the path of duty prevailed among several members of our congregations, the synod appointed one of its number to draw up the paper in question. As we hope it will be published, it is quite unnecessary for us to enter into a minute statement of its arrangement and argument. It will yet come to be noticed, when discussed by the synod at its next meeting.

It is an excellent paper. Perhaps it is long, and yet we could not have wanted any of it, for our own part. The writer pointed out, I., The claims of God on those nations which are favored with revelation. It behoves such kingdoms to be scriptural. (1) in their constitution—(2) in their legislature—(3) in their rules—(4) and in their administration. He then, II., Tried the British Constitution, by the great principles thus stated, and found it defective in every one of these particulars. This brought the writer to inquire, III., Into the duty of Christ's faithful witnesses, when living under such an unscriptural constitution. He clearly and triumphantly showed, that they could not identify themselves with it, and be blameless—they could not become a part of

the state machinery, no, not even the smallest pin, without exposing themselves to the condemnation in which the whole is involved. We were exceedingly pleased with the paper ; it was cool, clear, dispassionate, and conclusive.

An overture was presented, and at once agreed to, for the purpose of subjecting to salutary restrictions, all applications for pecuniary aid to the congregations under the inspection of synod. Hitherto, applications of this nature have sometimes been made on very slender grounds, and sometimes these application have been granted with very questionable propriety. It was, therefore, agreed in the the terms of the overture,—That no application for collections, or pecuniary aid, should be made to one congregation in behalf of another, without the countenance and the written authority of the Presbytery, in whose jurisdiction the congregation making the application was.

A report was laid on the table by the Missionary Committee. From the pressure of business before the court, it was not read, but the committee gave a verbal outline of its contents. From this, it appears, that a talented and pious young man has offered himself as a missionary to the heathen. His offer has been gladly accepted by the committee, and he is now prosecuting his studies with vigor and success, which will be completed in about two years.

Mr. M'Lachlan's labors command the warm approbation of the committee and synod. This will appear from the report which will soon be in the hands of our readers. His exertions are great ; they are characterized by Christian prudence and zeal ; and they are crowned by a large measure of success. This justifies us in calling on the members of our church for renewed support, and it warrants them in responding to the call with their wonted Christian liberality.

Mr. Geggie's engagement with the synod expires in September, and the committee were instructed to inform him that no new arrangement would be entered into with him. He is, therefore, at liberty to return to Scotland, or to remain in Canada, as it may suit his conveniency.

As no matured plan was laid before the synod anent the translation of ministers, it was agreed to rescind the interim law of 1839 on this subject, and to allow the matter of calls to remain in the same state as it was before the passing of that law.

A committee was appointed to consider what would be the

best plan for getting through the business of the synod, in the best manner and in the shortest time. At present, the strength of the members, is exhausted, and their time is frittered away in desultory conversation, about forms, &c., to the injury of great principles, which deserve the soberest regard and the closest attention of the unexhausted mind.

As many members had now left the court, and as many papers of deep importance were yet to be considered, it was agreed that the synod should conclude its present meeting, and assemble again at Glasgow on the 12th of October next, at 6 o'clock, P. M.. The meeting to be opened by a sermon from the Moderator.

JOHN KNOX'S SERMON BEFORE QUEEN MARY.

(Continued from page 210.)

“Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them,” verse 16.

The prophet means, that such as in the time of quietness did not rightly regard God nor his judgments, were compelled, by sharp corrections, to seek God; yea, by cries and dolorous complaints to visit him. True it is, that such obedience deserves small praise before men; for who can praise, or accept that in good part, which comes as it were in mere compulsion? And yet it is rare, that any of God's children do give unfeigned obedience, until the hand of God turn them. For if quietness and prosperity make them not utterly to forget their duty, both towards God and man, as David for a season, yet it makes them careless, indolent, and in many things unmindful of those things that God chiefly craves of them; which imperfection being espied, and the danger that thereof might ensue, our heavenly Father visits the sins of his children, but with the rod of his mercy, by which they are moved to return to their God, to accuse their former negligence, and to promise better obedience in all times hereafter; as David confessed, saying, “Before I fell in affliction I went astray, but now will I keep thy statutes.”

But yet, for the better understanding of the prophet's mind, we may consider how God doth visit man, and how man doth visit God; and what difference there is between the

visitation of God upon the reprobate, and his visitation upon the chosen.

God sometimes visits the reprobate in his hot displeasure, pouring upon them his plagues for their long rebellion ; as we have heard before, that he visited the proud, and destroyed their memory. At other times God is said to visit his people, being in affliction, to whom he sends comfort or promise of deliverance, as he visited the seed of Abraham, when oppressed in Egypt. And Zacharias said, that God had visited his people, and sent unto them hope of deliverance, when John the Baptist was born. But of none of these visitations our prophet here speaks, but of that which we have already touched ; namely, when God layeth his correction upon his own children, to call them from the venomous breasts of this corrupt world, that they suck not in over great abundance the poison thereof ; and he doth, as it were, wean them from their mother's breasts, that they may learn to receive other nourishment. True it is, that this weaning (or speaning, as we term it) from worldly pleasure, is a thing strange to the flesh. And yet it is a thing so necessary to God's children, that, unless they are weaned from the pleasures of the world, they can never feed upon that delectable milk of God's eternal verity ; for the corruption of the one either hinders the other from being received, or else so troubles the whole powers of man, that the soul can never so digest the truth of God as he ought to do.

Although this appears hard, yet it is most evident ; for what can we receive from the world, but that which is in the world ? What that is, the apostle John teaches ; saying, " Whatsoever is in the world, is either the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life." (1 John, ii.) Now, seeing that these things are not of the Father, but of the world, how can it be, that our souls can feed upon chastity, temperance and humility, so long as our stomachs are replenished with the corruption of these vices.

Now so it is, that flesh can never so willingly refuse these forenamed, but rather still delights itself in any one of them ; yea, in them all, as the examples are too evident.

It behoves therefore, that God himself shall violently pull his children from these venomous breasts, that when they lack the liquor and poison of the world, they may visit him and learn to be nourished of him. Oh, if the eyes of worldly princes should be opened, that they might see with what

humor and liquor their souls are fed, while their whole delight consists in pride, ambition, and the lusts of the corrupt flesh! We understand then how God doth visit men, as well by his severe judgments, as by his merciful visitation of deliverance from troubles, or by bringing trouble upon his chosen for their humiliation; and now it remains to understand how man visits God. Man doth visit God, when he appears in his presence, be it for the hearing of his word, or for the participation of his sacraments; as the people of Israel, besides the observations of their sabbaths and daily oblations, were commanded thrice a-year to present themselves before the presence of the tabernacle; and as we do, and as often as we present ourselves to the hearing of the word. For there is the footstool, yea, there is the face and throne of God himself, wheresoever the gospel of Jesus Christ is truly preached, and his sacraments rightly ministered.

But men may on this sort visit God hypocritically; for they may come for the fashion, they may hear with deaf ears; yea, they may understand, and never determine with themselves to obey that which God requires: and let such men be assured, that He who searches the secrets of hearts will be avenged of all such, for nothing can be more odious to God, than to mock him in his own presence. Let every man therefore examine himself, with what mind, and what purpose, he comes to hear the word of God; yea, with what ear he hears it, and what testimony his heart gives unto him, when God commands virtue, and forbids impiety.

Repinest thou when God requires obedience? Thou hearest to thine own condemnation. Mockest thou at God's threatenings? Thou shalt feel the weight and truth of them, albeit too late, when flesh and blood cannot deliver thee from his hand. But the visitation, whereof our prophet speaks, is only proper to the sons of God, who, in the time when God takes from them the pleasures of the world, or shows his angry countenance unto them, have recourse unto him, and, confessing their former negligence, with troubled hearts, cry for his mercy. This visitation is not proper to all the afflicted, but appertains only to God's children: for the reprobates can never have access to God's mercy in time of their tribulation, and that because they abuse his long patience, as well as the manifold benefits they receive from his hands; for as the same prophet heretofore saith, "Let the wicked obtain mercy, yet shall he never learn wisdom, but in the land of

righteousness," that is, where the true knowledge of God abounds, "he will do wickedly;" which is a crime above all others abominable; for to what end is it that God erects his throne among us, but that we should fear him? Why does he reveal his holy will unto us, but that we should obey it? Why does he deliver us from trouble, but that we should be witnesses unto the world, that he is gracious and merciful?

Now, when men hearing their duty, and knowing what God requires of them, do malapertly fight against all equity and justice, what I pray you, do they else, but manifest war against God? Yea, when they have received from God such deliverance, that they cannot deny but that God himself hath in his great mercy visited them, and yet they continue wicked as before; what deserve they but effectually to be given over unto a reprobate sense, that they may headlong run to ruin, both of body and soul? It is almost incredible that a man should be so enraged against God, that neither his plagues, nor yet his mercy showed, should move him to repentance; but because the Scriptures bear witness of the one and the other, let us cease to marvel, and let us firmly believe, that such things as have been, are even at present before our eyes, albeit many, blinded by affection, cannot see them.

Ahab, as it is written in the book of the kings, received many notable benefits of the hand of God, who visited him in divers sorts, sometimes by his plagues, sometimes by his word, and sometimes by his merciful deliverance. He made him king, and, for the idolatry used by him and his wife, he plagued the whole of the children of Israel by famine; he revealed to him his will, and true religion, by the prophet Elijah; he gave unto him sundry deliverances, but one most special, when proud Benhadad came to besiege Samaria, and was not content to receive Ahab's gold, silver, sons, daughters, and wives, but also required, that his servants should have at their pleasure whatsoever was delectable in Samaria. True it is, that his elders and people willed him not to hear the proud tyrant; but who made unto him the promise of deliverance? And who appointed and put his army in order? Who assured him of victory? The prophet of God only, who assured him, that by the servants of the princes of the provinces, who in number were only two hundred thirty and two, he should defeat the great army, in which there were two and thirty kings, with all their forces. And as the

prophet of God promised, so it came to pass; victory was obtained, not once only, but twice, and that by the merciful visitation of the Lord.

But how did Ahab visit God again for his great benefit received? Did he remove his idolatry? Did he correct his idolatrous wife Jezebel? No, we find no such thing; but the one and the other we find to have continued and increased in their former impiety: but what was the end thereof? The last visitation of God was, that dogs licked the blood of the one, and did eat the flesh of the other. In few words then we understand, what difference there is between the visitation of God upon the reprobate, and his visitation upon his chosen. The reprobate are visited, but never truly humbled, nor yet amended; the chosen being visited, they sob, and they cry unto God for mercy; which being obtained, they magnify God's name, and afterwards manifest the fruits of repentance. Let us therefore that hear these judgments of our God, call for the assistance of his Holy Spirit, that howsoever it pleaseth him to visit us, we may stoop under his merciful hands, and unfeignedly cry to him when he corrects us; and so shall we know in experience, that our cries and complaints were not in vain. But let us hear what the prophet saith further:

"Like as a woman with child, that draweth near travail, is in sorrow, and crieth in her pains, so have we been in thy sight, O Lord; we have conceived, we have borne in vain, as though we should have brought forth the wind. Salvations were not made to the earth, neither did the inhabitants of the earth fall," verses 17, 18.

This is the second part of the prophet's complaint, in which he, in the person of God's people, complains, that of their great affliction there appeared no end. This same similitude is used by our Master, Jesus Christ; for when he speaks of the troubles of his church, he compares them to the pains of a woman travailing in child-birth. But it is to another end; for there he promises exceeding and permanent joy after a sort, though it appear trouble. But here is the trouble long and vehement, albeit the fruit was not suddenly espied. He speaks no doubt of that long and dolorous time of their captivity, in which they continually labored for deliverance, but obtained it not before the complete end of seventy years. During which time, the earth, that is, the land of Judah, which sometimes was sanctified unto God, but was then giv-

en to be profaned by wicked people, got no help, nor perceived any deliverance : for the inhabitants of the world fell not ; that is, the tyrants and oppressors of God's people were not taken away, but still remained and continued blasphemers of God, and troublers of his church. But because I perceive the hours to pass more swiftly than they have seemed at other times, I must contract that which remains of this text into certain points.

The prophet first contends against the present despair ; afterwards he introduces God himself calling upon his people ; and, last of all, he assures his afflicted, that God will come, and require account of all the blood-thirsty tyrants of the earth.

First, Fighting against the present despair, he saith, "Thy dead shall live, even my body (or with my body) shall they arise ; awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust ; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs," verse 19.

The prophet here pierces through all impediments that nature could object ; and by the victory of faith, he overcomes, not only the common enemies, but the great and last enemy of all, death itself ; for this would he say, Lord, I see nothing for thy chosen, but misery to follow misery, and one affliction to succeed another ; yea, in the end I see, that death shall devour thy dearest children. But yet, O Lord ! I see thy promise to be true, and thy love to remain towards thy chosen, even when death appears to have devoured them : "For thy dead shall live, yea, not only shall they, but my very dead carcase shall arise ;" and so I see honor and glory to succeed this temporal shame, I see permanent joy to come after trouble, order to spring out of this terrible confusion ; and, finally, I see that life shall devour death, so that death shall be destroyed, and so thy servants shall have life. This, I say, is the victory of faith, when to the midst of death, through the light of God's word, the afflicted see life. Hypocrites, in the time of quietness and prosperity, can generally confess, that God is true to his promises ; but bring them to the extremity, and there the hypocrite ceases further to trust to God, than he seeth natural means, whereby God useth to work. But the true faithful, when all hope of natural means fail, flee to God himself, and to the truth of his promise, who is above nature ; yea, whose works are not so subject to the ordinary course of nature, that when nature fails, his power and promise fail also therewith.

Let us further observe, That the prophet here speaks not of all the dead in general, but saith, "Thy dead, O Lord, shall live:" in which words he makes a difference between those that die in the Lord, and those that die in their natural corruption, and in the old Adam. Die in the Lord can none, except those that live in him, (I mean, of those that attain to the years of discretion;) and none live in him, but those that, with the apostle, can say, "I live, and yet not I, but Christ Jesus that dwelleth in me: the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God." (Gal. ii.) Not that I mean, that the faithful have at all hours such a sense of the life everlasting, that they fear not the death and the troubles of this life; no, not so; for the faith of God's children is weak, yea, and in many things imperfect. But I mean, that such as in death, and after death shall live, must communicate in this life with Jesus Christ, and must be regenerated by the seed of life; that is, by the word of the everlasting God, which whosoever despises, refuses life and joy everlasting.

[To be continued.]

THE DESERT OF GOOD WORKS.

Although the good dispositions and actions of one fellow-creature, *deserve* to be commended, and in some cases to be rewarded, by another; yet, no good qualities or works of mere men, can *merit* the smallest blessing or good thing, from the infinite majesty of heaven.

With respect to the works of *unregenerate* persons; they are destitute of every thing, which can render an action, "good and acceptable in the sight of God." They are not done from true *faith* as a principle; (Tit. i. 15; 1 Tim. i. 5; Heb. xi. 6,) nor are they performed by a principle of *love*. (Rom. viii. 7, and xiii. 10.) Neither are they done by persons who are "*accepted* in the beloved." (Eph. i. 6.) They are not performed in obedience to the *will* of God, expressed in his holy law; (Zech. vii. 5. Rom. 7, 8,) nor are they done to his *glory* as the chief end of them. All unconverted persons are said, in Scripture, to be sinners, or workers of iniquity; (Psalm liii. 1, 4, Rom. iii. 9, 19) and their works, how advantageous soever many of them may be, to themselves or

others, are all, notwithstanding, represented as *sins*, in the account of an infinitely holy God: (Prov. xxi. 4; Isa. i. 13, 14) for, although many of them may be materially good, yet *all* of them are *formally* evil; and therefore, they are an abomination to Him. (Prov. xv. 8, and xxi. 27) Consequently, the very best works of unregenerate persons, instead of deserving the *favor* of God, deserve his *wrath and curse*, both in this life, and in that which is to come." Such works deserve eternal death, and cannot surely, at the same time, merit eternal life: (Rom. vi. 23) and yet, so deplorably ignorant and self-righteous, are unregenerate sinners; that they all rely, either wholly, or partially, on their own works, for a title to the favor of God, and even to endless felicity. Nay, so gross is their ignorance of themselves, and of the righteous law of God, and so inveterate is their pride, that they depend on such works, not only for a *title* to eternal life, but even for *security* from that eternal death, which is already *due* to them for their innumerable sins, and to which they are already condemned.

As for the good works of *regenerate* men; these also *cannot merit*, from the high and holy One, the smallest blessing, much less eternal life. So far as they are spiritually good, they do not, indeed, like the works of the unregenerate, deserve the wrath of God; but still they do not merit the smallest *favor* at his hand. Merit of condignity, or merit strictly so called, necessarily requires, That the works which can merit from God, such a reward as would, in strict remunerative justice, be a reward of *debt*, be performed in our *own strength*; that they be *more than we owe* to God, or more than he requires from us; that they be at least absolutely *perfect*, and that both in parts, degrees, and continuance; that their value be *equal* to that of the promised reward; and that the reward be, according to the strictest rules of justice, *due* for them. Hence it is manifest, that the very best works of the holiest of men, can merit no favor, no benefit for them, at the hand of God. The perfect works of Adam in innocence, could not merit any good thing at the hand of the Lord; much less, can the imperfect works of holy men now.

These works cannot, by their own *intrinsic value*, merit the smallest blessing from God. For 1st, All the performances that are spiritually good, proceed from the almighty agency of the *Spirit of Grace* in believers. (Philip ii, 13, 1 Cor. iv, 7) 2d. According to the precepts of his holy and righteous

law, believers *owe perfect and perpetual* obedience to the Lord. (Rom. viii., Matth. v. 28) 3d, The very best of their works, in this world, are *far from being answerable* to the high requirements of the holy law of God. (Isa. lxiv. 6, Gal. v. 17) And 4th, Their best actions, suppose they were perfect, could bear no proportion to any *Divine* blessing, especially to the inestimable blessing of *eternal life*. The former are the works of *finite* creatures: the latter, being *endless* felicity, or the eternal enjoyment of God and of the Lamb, is an *infinite* reward. (Rom. viii. 18, and xi. 6) It is evident then, that to believers, it is wholly a reward of grace, and in no degree, a reward of debt. "The *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi. 23)

As the good works of believers cannot, by their own intrinsic value, merit eternal life, or even the smallest blessing from God; so they cannot, by *paction*, procure the smallest *right*, either to the one or to the other. For, 1st, The law, as a rule of life, under which believers are, is a *perfect* law of liberty; and therefore it cannot contribute to, or admit of, *pactional* merit. The man "who looketh into that perfect law of liberty, and who is a doer of the word, shall indeed be blessed *in his deed*;" but he shall not be blessed for it. (1 Cor. ix. 21, James i. 25) 2d. The good works of believers, during their state of imperfection, are never correspondent, in a *perfect* degree, to the law as a rule of life. (Matth. xxii. 37—39, and v. 48, Eccle. vii. 20) The principles of faith and union with Christ, from which all the good works of believers do flow, imply that, the infinitely perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to them, which *alone* merits for them *a complete title* to the progress, and the consummation of eternal life. (2 Cor. v. 21, Gal. ii. 16, 20, Rom. v. 21) The infinitely spotless and meritorious righteousness of Christ, therefore, which is placed to their account, as well as the infinite grace of God, which abounds towards them, leaves *no room* for the *pactional* merit of their own works. (Eph. ii. 7—9, Rom. v. 16—19) And 4th, We read nowhere in Scripture, that God ever makes a covenant or *paction* with believers, in which, he promises to them eternal life, or even the smallest favor, *in consideration* of their own sincere obedience. The only covenant that he makes with them, is the covenant of grace; according to which, every spiritual and temporal blessing, is wholly a gift of free and sovereign grace. (Eph. ii. 8, 9.)

The good works of believers then do not, either by their own intrinsic value, or by paction, procure for them, a right to the smallest favor at the hand of God, much less to eternal life. It is the surety-righteousness of Jesus Christ, imputed to them, and received by faith alone, that merits, and so procures for them, a *complete title* to the beginning, progress, and perfection of eternal life. (Rom. v. 21.)

[To be continued.]

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA.

[From a letter to the Reformed Dutch Church.]

Reverend and dear brethren:—We, the Ministers and Elders of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland, now in Synod assembled in the city of Toronto, embrace this opportunity of once more addressing you as a sister church in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In regard to our own section of the church in the Canadas, we would remark, that there are many things, over which we are called to mourn, or for the existence of some of which, we have reason to fear, that we who are in the ministry, have cause to be filled with shame and regret. Many who were professors of religion in their native land, when they come here, if they do not cast off all regard to religion, seem in a great measure to lose its power; while the love of the world appears to become almost dominant in their hearts. And even where the gospel is regularly preached, we have to lament that there are but feeble indications of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Sinners hear, but are not cut to the heart, and few are heard crying out, "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?" Now, surely, if we who are appointed to the holy warfare, employed the sword of the Spirit aright, we might expect, on God's own promises, to be more successful in subduing the "stout-hearted," and in bringing them to bow at the feet of the Saviour. Alas! brethren, we at least feel for ourselves, that we need to be thoroughly men of prayer—more inflamed with love to the Saviour, and more deeply penetrated with sorrow for those who are perishing in their sins. But if, within the church, we witness a great deal of coldness and formality, beyond

its pale we have to deplore the existence of much infidelity and the prevalence of many of the grosser sins. This state of things, we feel, ought to inspire us with greater diligence to extend the knowledge of those doctrines, by our preaching and example, which alone can enlighten and purify the human soul.

We have suffered much as a church for the want of preachers to supply the destitute parts of the country. For, although the church of Scotland has manifested of late years the greatest diligence and zeal in sending out laborers, still, the supply has fallen far short of the demand; so far, indeed, that although our synod now numbers nearly ninety ordained ministers, yet we have more than a hundred vacant congregations or large settlements of our people, destitute of the regular means of grace. In order to provide a remedy for this alarming deficiency of ministerial laborers, steps have been taken, and funds to a large amount already secured, for establishing a University, in which we hope to be able to furnish a complete system of literary and theological education. We may just add, that the mother church has contributed largely to this desirable undertaking. For her *benevolence* in this matter, as well as many other proofs of her affectionate regard for us, we desire to feel the liveliest gratitude.

In our church courts, we enjoy peace, and are enabled to act in all great undertakings, with a high degree of unanimity. We may remark, that in operating upon the minds of men, we have, as a church, carefully avoided all novel measures and human expedients, being thoroughly convinced, that, whatever temporary good may seem to result from these, nothing but the truth of God brought home to the understanding and conscience by the Holy Spirit, can savingly convert sinners, or truly edify believers. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth,"—involves a great principle, which we wish ever to keep steadily in view.—And we are sure, Christian brethren, that you will agree with us in thinking, that there has seldom been a period in the history of the church, in which it was more incumbent on the followers of the Lord Jesus to possess accurate and enlarged views of religious truth, and to give a full and distinct exemplification of this truth in their lives, than the present. For, while it is true there is much to excite confidence and awaken pleasing anticipations, it must nevertheless

strike the careful observer that the moral state of the world, for some years past, has and still does present a strange and perplexing appearance. It is enough, in confirmation of this, merely to remark, that even in those countries nominally Christian, vast numbers of the people are found living without God and without hope in the world; while a feverish desire for something new and extravagant is seen to prevail to an alarming extent in many Christian communities—to such an extent indeed, that simple truth, as revealed in the word of God, and the plain and scriptural method of bringing it home to the understanding and heart, employed by holy men of old, are treated with indifference, and in not a few instances, with contempt. Popery, at the same time, that monstrous perversion of the religion of Christ, is appearing both in Europe and America, with renovated strength, and is seen, with a facility and precision peculiar to a matured system of error, adapting itself to modern, as it long did to ancient institutions; while it is drawing rapidly within its influence many from among protestants whose views on some of the essential principles of reformation have ever been ill defined, and never firmly embraced. At the same time infidelity, operating upon the liberalism of the age, stands ready with atheistic fury, to join any party that shall most successfully assail the truth of God, and pour dishonor upon Him who is anointed King in Zion. Nor is it a small matter of regret, that in such times serious dissensions should be found to prevail in some of those sections of the church of Christ, which have long been the bulwarks of truth, and which have contributed so greatly to extend its influence throughout the world. But we will not so far question your intelligence, as to suppose it necessary to enlarge on these matters; or so far doubt your piety, as to suppose you indifferent to what is fitted to produce painful emotions in all who love the Lord Jesus. But, dear brethren, if there be much in these things to beget sorrow and fear, there is, at least, nothing to produce despair. The ark may be shaken, but it cannot fall. The promises of Almighty God are always sure and steadfast. Christ, the King and Head of the church lives and reigns; and those whom he hath died to redeem, he will gather to himself. His power is a wall of fire around Zion; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against his kingdom. Nor has he left his people to hope against hope. The revival of evangelical religion which has

of late been witnessed in various parts of the world, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit—the wider diffusion of genuine Christian love among those who are brethren in the Lord, and the continued and greatly increased efforts which the church is now making, for the conversion of the heathen, and the success which has attended these efforts, are indications for good, which the Savior is giving to those who exercise faith in him, labor diligently to advance his cause, and wait patiently for the day of his power. And now, Christian brethren, when we see how iniquity abounds, how God is dishonored, and what vast multitudes are going down to eternal death; and, nevertheless, have the most certain grounds for believing, both from the promises of a covenant-keeping God, and the indications of his presence in the church, that his glory shall yet fill the earth, it surely becomes us, who labor in word and doctrine, to be instant in season and out of season—to preach the cross of Christ with strong faith and with special plainness, zeal and fullness, in order that he who was the hope of Israel, may soon become the hope in the glory of the whole gentile world. Brethren, let us never forget that we are co-workers with God.

DIRECTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.

I. *Make conscience of performing this duty.* The necessity of it will appear, if you consider,—1. God has repeatedly commanded it. 2. The people of God have always practised it. 3. There is great danger of being deceived; for every grace in the Christian has its counterfeit in the hypocrite. 4. Many professors have been deceived by neglecting it, and are ruined forever. 5. Your comfort and holiness depend, in a great measure, upon knowing your real state.

II. *Be very serious in the performance of it.* Set your heart to the solemn work, as in the presence of the searcher of hearts, who will judge the secrets of all men, on the great day. Heaven and hell are no trifles. The question before you is no less than this: am I a child of wrath or of God? If I should die when I have done reading this, where would this precious soul of mine be, forever, forever, forever?

III. *Be impartial,* or you lose labor; nay, you confirm your mistakes. On the one hand, resolve to know the *worst*

of yourself, the very worst. Some are afraid to know the worst, lest they should fall into despair, and this fear makes them partial. Suppose the worst, and that, after serious examination, it should appear, that you have neither faith nor holiness, yet remember your case is not desperate. The door of mercy is ever open to the returning sinner. It remains a blessed truth that, *whosoever cometh to Christ shall in no wise be cast out.* (John vi. 37.)

On the other hand be willing to know the best of yourself, as well as the *worst*. Do not suppose that humility requires you to overlook your graces, and notice only your corruptions.

IV. Judge of your graces by their *nature* rather than their *degree*. You are to try inherent graces by the *touch-stone*, not by the *measure*. The greatest degree is to be desired and aimed at, but the smallest degree is matter of praise and rejoicing. Do not conclude there is no grace because there is some corruption; or, that the spirit does not strive against the flesh, because the flesh strives against the spirit.

V. Let not the issue of this trial depend upon your knowledge of the exact time of your conversion, or the particular minister or sermon first instrumental in it. Some, yea, many are wrought upon by slow and insensible degrees. Grace increases like the daylight. No man doubts whether the sun shines at noon, because he did not see the daybreak.

VI. Take this caution, lest you stumble at the threshold. Think not that you must begin this work with doubting whether God will extend mercy to you, and save you; and that you must leave this a question wholly under debate, till you have found out how to resolve it by self-examination.—This is a common and pernicious error, laying the very foundation of this work in the great sin of unbelief. The question before you is not—Will God accept and save me, though a vile sinner, if I believe on Christ? But you are to enquire *Am I now, at this time, in an accepted state?* The former question is already resolved by God himself, who cannot lie. His word positively declares that every coming sinner shall be accepted and saved. This being determined, is not to be questioned. But you are to try, Whether you are now in a state of grace!

VII. Take care that you do not *trust* on your self-examination, rather than on Christ. There is a proneness to put duties in the place of Christ.

VIII. Examine yourself *frequently*, at least once a day. The Lord's Day evening is a most suitable season. The oftener you perform this work the easier it will become. If you do not obtain satisfaction at first, you may by repeated endeavors; and a scriptural, solid hope, will amply repay your utmost labor.

ECCLESIASTICAL PROCEEDINGS.

Eastern Sub. Synod.—This court met in Albany on the 13th ult. according to adjournment. As the General Synod, at its last meeting, had ordered the dissolution of the Sub. Synods, no business was transacted except the passing of a resolution directing the Clerk to hand over to General Synod, at its next meeting, all the records and documents of the court to be disposed of according to the judgment of the supreme judicatory. After the passing of this resolution, the court adjourned *sine die* by prayer. By the dissolution of the Sub. Synods, and the abolishing of the Delegated form of General Synod, the church returns, as to the organization of her courts, to the state that existed previously to the year 1825. This is right and will prove advantageous. In the judgment of all, we believe, the late system was complex, burdensome and, in the present circumstances of our church, unnecessary. The organization of Sub. Synods originated in New Light times, and was then opposed by several of the members of Synod. We have still believed that the originators of the system intended thereby to further their plans for introducing innovations into the church. Most remarkably, however, did the church's Head frustrate such intentions, by overruling and directing the system so as to make it the means of preventing the very things it was expected to accomplish. Now, as the whole arrangement has answered the end which, as far as we can see, the Head of the Church intended, we rejoice that it is laid aside. Every minister who can attend will now have a seat in Synod, and every session has the right to appoint one ruling elder as a delegate to the supreme judicatory of the church.

Southern Presbytery.—This Presbytery met, according to adjournment, in Albany on the 14th ult. The meeting was a full one, every ministerial member, with a fair representa-

tion of ruling elders, being present. The entire business was attended to fully in *one* day instead of occupying *three*, as has been frequently the case at former meetings. With this all the members were much gratified. A discourse, from Col. iii. 2, "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth," was received from James W. Shaw, a student of Theology, which was unanimously sustained as a piece of trial. Messrs. Samuel Bowden, a graduate of Columbia College, New-York, and William A. Acheson, a graduate of the New-York University, were taken under the care of Presbytery as students of Theology. The name of John Robinson was stricken from the list of students under Presbytery's care, on account of his neglect to attend or communicate with Presbytery for two years. A call from the congregation of Conococheague, on the Rev. David Scott, being sustained as a regular Gospel call, was presented to him for his acceptance or rejection. Mr. Scott, in a very feeling manner, declined the acceptance of the call. A petition from ruling elders of the Topsham congregation, praying Presbytery to give them leave to hold meetings of session, and attend to sessional business without an ordained minister being present, was received. Presbytery refused to grant the prayer of the petitioners, on the ground that they asked leave to do what is both unpresbyterial and unprecedented in any well ordered Presbyterian church. The other parts of business, except the appointment for supplies, were of a local character, and without general interest.

The following appointments of supplies were made :

MR. ROBERT HUTCHESON—Nov. 1, 2, 3, Sabbaths, Jan. 4, Feb. 1, *Coldenham*; Nov. 4, 5, Dec. 1, *Argyle*; Dec. 2, 3, 4, Jan. 1, 2, 3, *Kortright* and *Bovina*; Feb. 2, 3, *White Lake*; Feb. 4, March 1, *Baltimore*; March 2, 3, 4, April 1, 3, *Conococheague*.

MR. JOHN HOLMES—Oct. 4, all November and February, *Topsham*; Dec. 2, 5, March 1, 2, April 1, *Barnet*; Dec. 3, 4, March 3, 4, *Ryegate*; January at his own disposal.

REV. J. CHRYSTIE—Nov. 4, *Coldenham*; two Sabbaths, *Baltimore*.

REV. D. SCOTT—Nov. 5, Dec. 1, *Coldenham*.

REV. J. M. WILLSON—Two Sabbaths, *Conococheague*.

REV. M. RONEY—Feb. 4, March 4, *Coldenham*.

LETTER TO BISHOP HUGHES.

(From the Protestant Vindicator.)

Reverend Sir:—In a late speech you made on the subject of obtaining the Public School funds, you criticised “the Remonstrance” of each denomination of our Christian church,—sent into the board of corporation against your project of obtaining *Protestant money* to propagate the religion of *your own sect*. Your remarks on the “Remonstrance of the Protestant Reformed Dutch,” were unusually severe. You represented us in your sarcasm as bigots, illiberal, ungentlemanly, and even unchristian, and acting unconstitutionally.

Admitting for argument’s sake—although not correct, nor true,—that that “Remonstrance” was as you represent it, what was the appallingly different treatment of *your* church, of *your* fathers towards the Protestant church of *our* fathers? Admitting that we did belabor your late and renewed very extraordinary effort to rob the Protestants of New-York out of their public school funds; all this was done by calm and logical arguments. How differently *your* forefathers treated *our* forefathers, when they wished only to obtain their inalienable birthright from the powers of Rome. Did your forefathers attack them with calm arguments, and belabor them very efficiently merely with logical conclusions? No, reverend sir, they did deeds which no pope, nor bishop, nor priest of Rome has ever yet condemned,—nor even disapproved. And you differ from the pope and fellow priests if you even breathe the faintest disapprobation of their cruel deeds!

Now, in our venerable Dutch church, there are descendants of the Dutch, the Huguenots of France, the Scottish Covenanters, the good old Puritans,—some remains of the famous Waldenses, and the Protestants of Ireland.

Now, reverend sir, you pronounce us and our Remonstrance, rude, ungentlemanly, illiberal, severe! But, who massacred the Dutch by the hands of the Duke of Alva? The Roman Catholic church, as you know! Who butchered thirty-six thousand Dutch Protestants by his own hands, and those of his troops? The Duke of Alva, the devoted and *pious* servant of the Roman Catholic church! Who murdered 100,000 French Protestants at the time of the St. Bartholomew massacre? Charles IX. and the priests and troops of the Roman Catholic church! Who revoked, in deepest treachery, the edict of Nantz, and exiled hundreds of thousands of protestant French, and covered the whole land with havoc and blood, and rapine, and misery? Louis XIV., at the instigation of the Roman Catholic church! Who sent to the stake the Scottish martyrs,—a Hamilton,—a Wisheart,—and many others? The priests of a Roman Catholic church! Who massacred so many thousands in England in “*Bloody Mary’s*” days? The Roman Catholic church! Who massacred 100,000 Irish protes-

tants in 1341? The Roman Catholic church as you well know! Who murdered by her crusades thousands of the Waldenses, and the Albigenses? The Roman Catholic church! Who caused that bloody battle between the gallant host of the Waldenses, and the slavish troops of France, and the papal troops, in which there fell in one day, about 100,000 Waldenses, and as many French and Italians? The Roman church, with the pope at its head, caused this massacre of about two hundred thousand men!!!

You know that we, of the Protestant church, "*fight*" with the tongue and pen, and use efficient logic,—as noble Luther and all the Reformers did. But your church has invariably brought to bear against the CHURCH OF GOD, the logical arguments of chains, and dungeons, and inquisitions, and *auto da fes*, and racks, and sword, and the horrid punishment of burning alive at the stake!!!

Now, reverend sir, which of us is the kindest, most generous, liberal, and gentlemanly antagonist? I pray you what greater cry could you have made against us, had we adopted *your* church's mode of logic and argument. Every complaint you make comes with an awkward grace from one whose church never disavowed,—never disapproved,—never forbade racks, and dungeons, and inquisitions and the stake. If your pope and church ever disapproved of these cruelties, show us the Bull, or allocution. You cannot. It never has yet been uttered.

A DUTCHMAN.

PROGRESS OF PERFECTIONISM.

(From the New-York Observer.)

Recent opportunities of acquiring extensive information on the subject, have convinced us that modern Perfectionism is making progress in the churches in some parts of the country. Its dangerous tendency and unscriptural assumptions have been hitherto noticed, but we have reason to fear that the churches are not sufficiently awake to the importance of the subject, and to the necessity of guarding with untiring care against the insidious inroads of this moral poison. The peculiar feature of the danger lies in the fact that the error has been mingled with much truth; and many imbibe it with an honest persuasion, that they are not only more holy than others, but also more wise and spiritually enlightened.

It is true that Christians may and should continually grow in grace; that they should *press forward* towards the mark; that the character of God should be the standard of holiness; and that no believer ought to be satisfied till he wakes in *His* likeness. It is true that Christians make small attainments in holiness compared with what they might make; that they are guilty before God of living below their privileges; that they ought to gird up the loins of their mind, and, laying aside every weight, to mount up on wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint. All this is true, and it is still true, that the history of the church, while the canon of Scripture was yet unclosed, and

the records of the church since the book was sealed, have not furnished the man who was spotless in the sight of his fellow men, much less in the sight of God. And the new light of modern Perfectionism has not been able to show us why the four thousand years that preceded the Saviour's advent, and the nearly twenty centuries following, have not given birth to the man who could lay his hand on his heart, and claim sinless perfection. The Son of Mary still stands on the records of the universe, the only individual born of a woman who sinned not. It would seem as if the curse which the first transgression incurred, follows the sinner till the last enemy, *death*, is destroyed. When the victory over death is given through our Lord Jesus Christ, the emancipated soul rejoices in its deliverance from the fetters of flesh and sin, and, with joyful haste, wings its unimpeded flight to the bosom of the all-holy God.

The evidence of the progress which this subtle error is making in the country, is derived from personal observations, communications verbal and written, and from the publications which the perfectionists are circulating industriously in various parts of the land. It is well known that an institution in Ohio, designed to train youth for the gospel ministry, teaches these sentiments, and that it yearly sends forth numbers of young men who scatter still more widely the seeds of this error.—In some places whole churches have become corrupted, and now enjoy a ministry suited to their tastes, and in other places members of the churches have been seduced, and are laboring diligently to instil their views into the minds of the remainder, and thus silently but steadily the work of corruption is in progress. Many good people, whose views are now, in the main, correct, admit into their families the publications of the Perfectionists, and finding therein much that is "lovely and of good report," much that breathes the gospel, and excites to high and holy attainments in divine life, they are gradually led to believe that they have been mistaken in their prejudices against perfectionism, and that they may adopt the sentiments, not only with safety but advantage. We have known ministers of the gospel thus led astray. Thus converts are multiplied.

There is manifestly a duty in reference to this subject resting upon the church. They who are set for the defence of the truth should make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the matter in all its bearings. Ecclesiastical bodies ought to bear testimony, kindly, clearly, and decidedly against it. And they who would take the necessary pains to inform themselves on the subject, may be surprised to find how far the error has spread even in their own neighborhood, and how many are disposed to defend the essential features of perfectionism, who will not avow themselves converts to its faith.

BRITISH SLAVERY IN INDIA.

Public attention has of late been directed to the enormities tolerated and practised by the British government in India, and developments

have been made that astonish the mind and rouse the indignation of the civilized world.

Much has been said of the support which the British government has long given to the idolatrous worship of Pagans ; of national salutes fired in honor of heathen festivals ; of monies appropriated to pay the expenses of heathen rites and ceremonies ; and there is reason to hope that that government has commenced in these things a work of reform. That the name of a christian people may no longer be disgraced, and the wrath of heaven no more provoked by such practices, is the prayer of all the good. But as the attention of the Christian public has been turned to India, a demand has been made for information concerning the internal condition of that country, and this demand, we are glad to learn, is likely to be met. Every month brings to light some facts on this subject, that go to show the degraded state of the native population, and the systematic efforts made by those in authority, to perpetuate that degradation. A work has just been published, detailing the law and custom of slavery in British India, in a series of letters to THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON, Esq., of England. The letters are from the pen of William Adam, an Englishman, and for several years a resident in India, who has devoted much time and pains to the compilation of facts on this subject, and in these letters he spreads them before the world. Presuming that they are to be relied on as correct, we wish the book might be read by those who are concerned for the welfare of man, and especially by the good people of Great Britain, who will now have the whole matter before them, so that they can form an intelligent opinion respecting the importance of great and speedy efforts to deliver the millions of the East from cruel oppression.

This writer remarks, that since the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies, it seems to be generally assumed, that it has ceased to exist throughout the British dominions, although it may be shown that the number of slaves in the East Indies, under the authority of the British government, is probably as great as the number of those who have been emancipated in the West Indies.

The people of England have just paid twenty millions sterling to emancipate eight hundred thousand slaves in the British West Indies ; and while they are congratulating themselves that now at length every British subject is a freeman, they are to be told that their congratulations are premature ; that their work is only half done ; that there are probably, 800,000 slaves more, British subjects, in the East Indies ; that this slavery has been perpetuated and something aggravated by the East India Company's government ; and that there is no prospect of its ceasing, unless their powerful voice shall be put forth to demand its extinction. The government of England have been engaged for years in a hard-fought battle with slave-holders in the West Indies, and with the slave-holding interest in England, and they have just succeeded, at the expense of the people of England, in the great work of emancipation. They have been for years engaged in a diplomatic war, too unsuccessfully waged, with foreign powers against the slave trade, and with praiseworthy energy and perseverance they are still adopting

measures against this hydra-headed monster. Her Majesty's ministers are now to be told—(are they *now* to be told, or have they long known and neglected their duty in this matter?)—that one of the heads of this monster is in British India; that even the slave trade has not wholly ceased there; that the laws enacted by the parliament of Great Britain against the slave trade are in part either expressly set aside, or acknowledged to be wholly a dead letter; that slavery itself exists in British India; that it exists probably as extensively, and to a great extent in as aggravated a form, as it did lately in the West Indies; that it has been and is legalized, and supported by the East India Company, a creature of their own forming; and that notwithstanding the express requisition of parliament to that effect, no movement has been made by the East India Company's government towards its extinction.

FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

The treaty lately concluded between England and the northern powers produces in France a deep sensation. Since the revolution of July, England has been our most intimate ally, and all at once, when we least expected, she has abandoned us, and signed a convention with Russia, Austria and Prussia, to the exclusion of France! This event has revived the old enmities which existed for so many years between the French and the English. The people remember that England has been our rival, our enemy in every period of our history, and that we could never place in her any confidence.

It cannot be dissimulated: our alliance with England is *virtually* broken, though it may not yet be politically. The words *perfidious Albion* and the like, have begun to circulate in all parts of France. The government itself, in spite of the caution and prudence which are enjoined by its position, has shown in these circumstances a lively indignation, and has announced by its journals that it is ready for war, if the treaty of London is put in execution. More than 100,000 soldiers are added to our army; the navy is put on the war footing; powder, balls, arms of every kind are busily manufactured; it would seem in short that we are on the eve of a general war.

The feelings of the nation, generally speaking, are highly incensed. All the organs of public opinion, with two or three exceptions, say openly that France must appeal to the sword, if Russia and England interpose forcibly in the struggle between the Sultan and the Pacha of Egypt. What will be the result of this great contest? No human foresight can tell; God only knows. It is certain that, if war should break out it would be terrible. France would employ the revolutionary measures which have heretofore been so successful. She would stir up to mutiny Italy, Belgium, the provinces on the Rhine, a part of Germany, by promising the people freedom from despotism. This political power of France is enormous; all who are oppressed, suffering, unfortunate in Europe, would hear her call to liberty, and would answer by a shout of hope; so that, though alone against four powerful adversaries, the French nation would still have chances of success.

Let us hope, however, that we shall not be pushed to the dreadful extremity of war. I believe, for my part, that the French have been too easily angered; they have shown in this dispute a morbid and unreasonable sensibility. The English government, it is true, have taken harsh measures; they have deceived us. But this disappointment is not yet followed with effects important enough to produce a general war. It is desirable that proper concessions be made on both sides to avoid a bloody struggle. France should yield something for the sake of preserving peace, and England should also feel that she would have more to lose than gain, by uniting with Russia in a war against France.—*French Letter.*

ITEMS OF INTELLIGENCE.

The following items, gleaned from papers brought in by the last arrivals from England, are full of interest, especially to all who are observing the movements of the nations in the light of Prophecy. The ulterior course which will be adopted in reference to the affairs of the East cannot, however, be definitely determined, we think, from any measures that have yet transpired. The question of a general war among the European powers, though producing immense excitement, remains unsettled as to the time when "the great gathering of the nations" shall commence, or whether the *eve* of that grand event has actually arrived.—*Ed.*

Turkey and Egypt.—On the 27th August, Mehemet-Ali called together a council of Ministers, Beys, and Sheiks of several Arab tribes, to whom he submitted the propositions of the Four Powers, together with a letter from Ibrahim Pacha, who offered to renounce in his own right the hereditary possession of Syria. The assembly approved of these terms, and on the following day the Viceroy, having summoned the four Consuls to his palace, declared to them, that he would content himself with Egypt and Acre, and restore the fleet to the Sultan, provided he was permitted to hold the government of Syria during his life. The Consuls replied, that they had no power to interfere with or modify the conditions of the *ultimatum*, and that they could not accordingly comply with his last request. The French Consul took no ostensible part in the affair, but on the 30th sent off M. Walewski, for Constantinople, with the proposition of the Pacha.

The London Morning Herald, of Oct. 3, contains the following announcement:

MALTA, Sept. 27.—The Prometheus, which left Beyroot on the 20th, announces that, after a bombardment of nine days, which reduced the town to ashes, the Egyptians evacuated the town in the night, and the allies took possession of it.

The Oriental, which quitted Alexandria on the 24th, makes known that the firman deposing Mehemet Ali had been communicated on the 21st to his Highness by the Consuls General of the Four Powers, who instantly struck their flags and returned on board their shipping.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—The letter signed David Steele is inadmissible, on account of the exceedingly bad spirit which it manifests, and the abuse with which it abounds. Disappointed ambition and angry PERSONAL feelings show themselves, very evidently to us, throughout the whole paper. No such communication has yet been admitted to our pages, and we intend that no such one shall be. It properly belongs ELSEWHERE.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

DECEMBER, 1840.

No. X.

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF HOS. XIV. 1, 2.

“O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord ; say unto him take away all iniquity and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips.”

The Israelites having associated with the neighbouring nations, became exceedingly degenerated ; they learned from these nations their corrupt practices ; and of these the sin of idolatry was not the least. Of all the sins with which the Israelites were chargeable, this was most offensive to God. It was an open violation of a positive precept of the Divine law ; a practical abandonment of the covenant which God had made with their fathers ; and a renouncing of the peculiar relation which subsisted between God and them.—This covenant connexion is expressed by the marriage relation ; and idolatry is stigmatized as adultery. To recover the Israelites from their spiritual adulteries ; and arouse them from lukewarmness, is the burden of Hosea’s prophecy.—Their sins are depicted by the prophet in the most vivid colors ; and the most awful threatenings are denounced if they do not repent. Their condition is described as the most alarming in which a professed people of God can possibly exist. “Ephraim is a cake unturned.—He hath sown the wind and shall reap the whirlwind. He is joined to his idols, let him alone.”

But amid all their provocations, God remembers mercy ; and with all the compassion of a tender parent whose life has been imbibtered, and whose soul has been grieved by the

wickedness and ingratitude of a profligate child, he bewails over their transgressions ; and in language of deepest pathos offers them pardon. " How shall I give thee up Ephraim ? How shall I deliver thee, Israel ? How shall I make thee as Admah ? How shall I set thee as Zeboim ? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger. I will not return to destroy Ephraim : for I am God and not man ; the holy One in the midst of thee ; and I will not enter into the city. O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God."

With the origin of the name " Israel," every reader of the Bible is familiar. It is the honored title, conferred upon Jacob on the memorable occasion when he wrestled with the angel, and as a prince he had power with God and prevailed. It signifies superiority and dignity. By this name the descendants of Jacob were distinguished from the nations around them. When the ten tribes revolted from the house of David and rallied under the banner of the Son of Nebat, the name was generally used to distinguish them from the two tribes who remained faithful to the family of David, and who after this period were called Jews.

In the sense, in which the name was first given to Jacob it is applicable to all believers. They are the Israel of God. " For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel. They who are the children of the flesh these are not the children of God. But the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

" O Israel, thou hast fallen by thine iniquities."

It may justly be said of all the descendants of Adam, that they have fallen by their iniquities. The complaint of the prophet may be applied to them.—How is the gold become dim ! How is the most fine gold changed ! Yes, they have fallen by breaking the covenant of their God, and rebelling against the government of their Maker. They have been guilty of two great evils saith the prophet, in forsaking the fountain of living waters and hewing out to themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. This describes the conduct and character of all mankind. " For," says the Apostle, " we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. That every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may become guilty before God." Rom. iii. 9, 19.

In the words under consideration, it does not appear that the prophet refers to this general charge, but to some partic-

ularsin especially chargeable upon the ten tribes. God had made a covenant with Abraham, and in Abraham, with his posterity, espousing them, that they might be a peculiar people to himself, zealous of good works. In virtue of this covenant relation he preserved them amidst numberless difficulties ; gave them success over a host of powerful enemies, and conferred upon them the highest honors in the sight of a wicked and idolatrous world. He bestowed upon them the unspeakable blessing of being his visible covenant-society : he placed among them the symbols of his immediate and gracious presence ; he spoke to them by his prophets, and counselled them by his servants ; and raised them to a state of dignity and honor which no other nation enjoyed.

What state of human society can be conceived so eminently felicitous ? As a contrast to this, read their history, and from it learn their national character, their private virtues, and their personal religion, at the time this prophecy was addressed to them. Let us look at their universal corruption of manners, and debauchery of character ; and it will give some idea of the degraded condition into which they had brought themselves, and at the same time, illustrate the apostrophe of the prophet, " O Israel, thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." The iniquity was national, and implied a total renouncement of the special government of the most high God. The first step of their corruption was the rejection of the lawful heir of the throne of David, to whom God had given the kingdom, and then unfurling the standard of rebellion under the warlike, but wicked Jeroboam. Thus, they formally separated themselves as a nation, from God's covenant people ; the next step of their apostacy was a necessary, and almost unavoidable consequence, of the former. The sagacious and crafty usurper perceived that, if the people were allowed to go up three times in the year to Jerusalem, as the law required, they would soon become alienated from his government and return in dutiful submission to their lawful sovereign. To prevent this, Jeroboam appointed a spurious priesthood, and instituted a false and corrupt worship. 2 Kings, xii. 26—33.

Having gone so far in their course of backsliding, their next step of retrogression was only, what might have been expected. They had left the community and fellowship of God's people, and dared with sacrilegious and impious hands to set up a rival to the temple of God, and prostituted the holy of-

fice of the priesthood by admitting the unqualified and profane to perform its functions. They soon openly renounced the worship of their Maker ; and instead of serving the living and true God, they bowed down to stocks and stones, the work of their own hands ! Idolatry prevailed, the worship of God was forsaken, and they bound themselves in wicked alliances with the avowed enemies of God, and the church. They did every thing in their power to banish the worship of the God of heaven from among men, and substitute in its room idolatry and practical atheism.

Now, though we have not sinned in the same way, are we not chargeable with guilt. Though we have not renounced the worship of God by committing idolatry, have we not committed many other sins ? Are not all of us chargeable with many sins,—and especially with the sin of neglecting the privileges of the gospel ? Is not this nation chargeable with the guilt of despising the government and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, saying by its practice, “Let us asunder break his bands and cast his cords from us ?” God, however waits to be gracious : there is forgiveness with him that he may be feared. “With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.” To him that confesseth and forsaketh his iniquity, God will show mercy.—And the nation that returns from its iniquity, God will bless with national prosperity.

“Return unto the Lord thy God, take with you words and turn unto the Lord.”

This is either a command or an exhortation. If a command, it points out our duty ; if an exhortation, it becomes a ground of encouragement, and a motive to repentance.—What are we to understand by turning unto the Lord ? Does it imply that the party addressed, is able of himself to turn unto the Lord ; and in virtue of this, to find acceptance with him ? No ! Evangelical repentance is the gift of God.—“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots ? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.” But though sinners cannot savingly repent by any power of their own ; yet God deals not with man as a machine, but as a reasonable and intelligent creature. He enjoins commands, addresses exhortations, demands obedience, proposes motives, and teaches that the work of repentance is indispensably necessary to his acceptance with God. It is the appointment of God that means should be used ; they

have indeed no necessary power to produce repentance, but through their instrumentality God turns sinners to 'Himself. The power by which the means are rendered efficient, is the omnipotence of Divine grace.

The command "Return unto the Lord thy God," addressed to the children of Israel, made it obligatory upon them to abandon their sinful connexion with the enemies of God,—to forsake their idolatry,—and to perform the various moral and religious duties which he had enjoined upon them. They were under obligation to do all this, by former discoveries of the divine will which had been made known to them: they were bound too, by their own voluntary profession of covenant relation to God. The renewal of the command, in these words, increases their obligation, and leaves them without apology or excuse. Encouragement is implied in the renewal of the command; it shows that God is still waiting to be gracious: and that if they "return unto the Lord," they shall find acceptance with him. The command, to "return unto the Lord," is addressed to us, as well as to the Israelites: like them we have sinned; we have too often disregarded the known will of God, and violated our own plighted obligations. To us as sinners, is the same encouragement to repentance held out; we shall find acceptance if we turn unto him. "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?"

The exposition which we have given, of turning unto the Lord, is illustrated and enforced by what follows. Turning unto the Lord, the Israelites are commanded to take with them words, and say unto the Lord take away all iniquity. This confirms the view which has been given of the duty commanded—that it does not remove iniquity, but is simply the employment of means which God will bless, so as to lead them to that repentance that needs not to be repented of.

"Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord; say unto him, take away all iniquity."

Here the duty of prayer is commanded; "Take with you words." That is not real repentance which ends in idle and inactive wishes: true repentance leads the sinner to the throne of grace, and there to pour out the anguish of his heart to God in prayer for the pardon of his sins. What an encouragement and motive to prayer is this? The prayer of faith has the promise of pardon: "ask and ye shall receive," and says the Saviour, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will

give it you." Nor is it for one or two sins; or sins of a particular kind, that we are to seek forgiveness; but for "all iniquity." When we are thus commanded to take with us words and say unto the Lord, "take away all iniquity," the command includes a promise of forgiveness. For whatever God commands us to ask of him, he is willing to bestow.—He never "says to any of the seed of Jacob seek ye my face in vain." God knows all our transgressions; and numerous and aggravated as they are, he promises to forgive them: let us go to him then in prayer and implore pardon; and let the number and aggravation of our offences only increase our solicitude and diligence.

Is not this the course which men pursue in other matters? When they are anxious to obtain favours from their fellow-men, they ask, they importune them, till either they obtain what they seek, or discover that further importunity is useless. Sinners have no need of fearing this last result; their importunities will never weary the Almighty; the prayer of faith will never be refused, when the cry of the needy comes up before the Lord, he hears and answers. "They looked unto him and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him;—and saved him out of all his troubles." Ps. xxxiv. 5, 6. The necessity of the sinner urges him to pray for pardon; and duty urges him. And O how stupid and hard-hearted must we be, if neither a feeling of necessity, nor a conviction of duty can induce us to pray,—to plead with God to take away all our iniquity!

Prayer does not necessarily procure pardon of sin. Nor does the petition of the condemned criminal necessarily procure a remission of punishment; but will he not sue for it as earnestly as if remission necessarily followed? Should not the sinner then, take with him words, and plead with God, that he may take away "all iniquity?" Should he not importunately ask forgiveness for all his sins, disburden his weary laden soul of all its sorrows, and pour out his complaint to him whose ear is ever open to the cry of penitence; and who with more than bowels of parental affection, bewails the obstinacy of his backsliding children? It is a duty which reason itself dictates, and revelation makes obligatory. Prayer cannot indeed change the purpose of him "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," James i. 17. but let it ever be remembered, that he hath appointed it as

the means by which the promised blessing is to be enjoyed. "To him that knocketh it shall be opened, and to him that asketh it shall be given."

O how should it revive the desponding soul, to know that there is a possibility of pardon? How much more should the sinner be encouraged to hear, not only of the possibility, but the certainty of pardon—the pardon of "all iniquity."—Does a view of sin break the heart of the penitent? Then, Christ is the physician of souls; he binds up the broken-hearted. Is sin a burden, that is too much for us to bear? The scripture tells us for our encouragement, that it is cast into the depth of the seas, and can never more weigh us down by its weight. Is it a debt, that we cannot liquidate? Then, Christ appears as surety and settles the account on our behalf. He gave himself a ransom for our iniquities; and procured for us a discharge written in the crimson lines of his own blood! Does the charge of guilt assume a legal form,—is it a hand writing of ordinances? Then, Christ has taken "it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."

"Receive us graciously."

This points out the principle on which we find acceptance with God. Pardon is not obtained as the reward of asking it, nor as the reward of repentance, nor on the ground of merit for any thing we have done, or may do. No. It is of grace alone. Grace not only as to the benign manner of imparting pardon,—nor as it puts us in the way of repentance, and enables us to perform duty,—but grace in the exciting and procuring cause of pardon. The sinner has nothing to plead of his own, why justice should not be executed against him; he has no plea for even an arrest of judgment. If he is delivered it must be on the principle of grace. "I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake and will not remember thy sins." Here grace shines in the moving cause of pardon—"for mine own sake," saith the Lord. God, whose nature "is love," and whose name is "merciful and gracious," required nothing to induce him to exercise mercy to the sinner; but the law has claims upon him, and these claims must be satisfied. The Lord Jesus Christ voluntarily engages to be the surety of sinners, and to satisfy the law in their place. It is in virtue of this that sin is pardoned, and the sinner "accepted in the Beloved." It was for this that Christ was numbered among transgressors, and poured out his soul unto death.

“Heaven wept that man might smile,
 “Heaven bled that man might never die.”

The penitent in his prayer pleads the satisfaction of Christ, urges his merit, and trusts in the mercy of God. The grace of God manifested by the righteousness of Christ is all his plea.—O Lord, receive me “graciously.”

“So will we render the calves of our lips.”

In this clause the penitent is taught to say that he will render unto God the calves of his lips. In the preceding clauses, he had been instructed to plead for pardon, now he is supposed to have obtained it, and is therefore represented as expressing his gratitude for the benefit received. “The calves” of the lips, are the fruit or produce of the lips. The apostle furnishes us with both the proof and an illustration of this scripture. “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.” Heb. xiii. 15.

In the first part of the verse, prayer is expressed by the term “words.” There it signifies the prayer of supplication pleading for mercy: in this part the penitent promises to render the prayer of thanksgiving,—the fruit of the lips, giving praise to God for his goodness. This is the effect of the work of grace, begun and carried on in the soul. O, how the soul flows out in acts of devotion and holy gratitude unto the Lord, when it becomes sensible of his loving kindness! “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases: who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies.”—Ps. ciii. 3, 4. From this subject let us learn the great love of God to sinners. When man had fallen by his iniquity, and wandered into the far country of sin, and unable to return unto God; he sends his own Son to seek the wanderers, and bring them back to the family, and restore them to the privileges of the sons of God. Let us rejoice too, that He continues to be gracious, and that he has promised to “receive us graciously,” if we return unto him. This is all that the sinner needs; let us then, as an evidence of acquiescence, and as saying amen to his promise, render unto the Lord the fruit of our lips,—the offering of praise,—the sincere and holy expression of spiritual joy and heart-felt gratitude. Finally, we ought to produce the fruit of a holy conversation, and a godly life. If repentance does not improve the char-

acter, and reform the conduct, it is spurious ; it is not that repentance, which needeth not to be repented of. It is only the sorrow of the world that worketh death. Be not deceived ; “without holiness, no man shall see God.”

MINUTES OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD OF
IRELAND, HELD AT MONEYMORE, JULY, 1840.

Moneymore, July 14, 1840, twelve o'clock, noon.

The SYNOD of the REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in Ireland met, when a Sermon was preached from James iii, 15-17,—“This wisdom descendeth not from above,” &c., by Rev. Arthur Fullerton, the Moderator, who constituted the Court by prayer. On the roll being called, the following Ministers and Ruling Elders were present :—

Of the WESTERN PRESBYTERY—Rev. J. P. Sweeny, A. Fullerton, J. Stott; with Samuel Erwin and Wm. Gregg, Ruling Elders.

Of the NORTHERN PRESBYTERY—Rev. Simon Cameron, James Dick, Thos. Houston, Robert J. Watt; with Samuel Jackson, James Jamison, John Duncan and Andrew Wilson, Ruling Elders.

Of the EASTERN PRESBYTERY—Rev. John Paul, D. D., Wm. Henry, D. D., John Alexander and Clarke Houston; with James Adrain, John M'Cracken, (alternate,) Andrew Blakely and James Kinnear, Ruling Elders.

Of the SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY—Rev. William Gibson, James Steen; with Wm. Wylie, Ruling Elder.

ABSENT—Rev. Dr. Stavely, Rev. Messrs. Britten, Gordon T. Ewing, James Smyth, Samuel Carlile, William Toland, John W. Graham, John Hawthorne and Thomas Cathcart.

John Rodgers, Ruling Elder, from the vacancy of Rathmelton, is present, and Patrick Close, from the vacancy of Portglenone.

1. The Rev. R. J. Watt is elected Moderator.

2. It is reported that the Rev. William Russel was ordained on the 9th inst. in the congregation of Ballyclare, under the care of Synod's Committee, and his name, with that of Robert Witherhead, his Elder, is added to the roll.

The Rev. William Sommerville, from the Presbytery of New Brunswick, is present, and he is cordially invited to a seat in Court, of which he accepts.

3. It is agreed that the times of meeting, during the several sessions of Synod, be the same as those recorded in Minute II. of last year; and that the Court will not, in ordinary cases, enter on any new business after 9 o'clock, P. M., each day.

4. The Minutes of Synod's proceedings last year are read and approved.

The Rev. S. Carlile, with Robert M'Caughan, his Elder, are now present.

5. Agreed, that Presbyteries meet this evening, to prepare reports; that the members of Synod meet as a Committee of Bills, to-morrow, at 7 o'clock, A. M.; that the Missionary Board meet at half past 7 o'clock, to-morrow evening; and that the Rev. James Steen conduct the devotional exercises to-morrow, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

The Rev. John Nevin, Liverpool, is now present, and his name is added to the roll.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

Wednesday, 10 o'clock, A. M.

The Synod meets, and is constituted.

The Rev. Messrs. Cathcart and Britten are now present; with William Moore, Ephraim Chancellor, John Hawthorne, and James Harper, Ruling Elders.

Intimation is given by Rev. T. Cathcart, that the Rev. T. Carlile and the Rev. William Sweeny, were ordained by the Southern Presbytery since the last meeting of Synod; the former to the congregation of Rathfriland, and the latter to that of Ballylane; and their names, with James Little and John Hutchinson, their Elders, are entered on the roll.

The Rev. J. Steen conducts the devotional exercises.

6. The following Reports of Presbyteries are submitted and read:—

THE NORTHERN PRESBYTERY report, that they have held five regular meetings since last meeting of Synod. The public ordinances of religion are regularly dispensed, and, in general, diligently attended, in the congregations under their inspection; the days of thanksgiving and fasting, appointed by Synod, having been duly observed, and the sacrament of the Lord's supper having been celebrated, in the greater number of the congregations, *twice* during the past season.

Contributions continue to be regularly made in behalf of the cause of Missions, and the Presbytery rejoice in being enabled to report, that in matters connected with the propagation of the Gospel, and the

diffusion of a Covenanted Testimony, the people committed to their care appear to take an increasing interest. The pressure of the last season has been severely felt by a large number of their members, and some congregations have suffered considerably from emigration. They have reason of gratitude, however, to the glorious Head of the Church that they enjoy undisturbed peace and concord throughout their bounds, and that the people, generally, give comfortable evidence of love to the good ways of the Lord, and of regard to practical godliness.

The following are the students who are at present under the care of Presbytery:—Messrs. Hutchinson M'Fadden, William J. M'Dowell, Robert Nevin, James M'Keown, Stewart Fullerton, James Kennedy, James Clarke, William M'Carrol, William M'Caw, Alexander Savage, John Marcus, Thomas Chancellor, William and Francis Anderson.—Of these, Messrs. W. J. M'Dowell, Stewart Fullerton, and Robert Nevin, are recommended to Synod for general examination.

Dr. Paul presented certain papers at one of their meetings, which the Court refused to admit. Against this decision Dr. Paul protested, and appealed to Synod.

Rev. ROBERT J. WATT is Moderator for the present year, and
Rev. THOMAS HOUSTON, Clerk.

THE EASTERN PRESBYTERY report, that they have held their usual meetings, and several committees have met on particular occasions.—The Rev. Mr. Graham and his Elder, on the 5th of May last, applied to Presbytery for their concurrence in having the sacrament dispensed at Bailliesmill. They were asked if they were willing to accept of the members of the Eastern Presbytery for assistants: They refused to answer. They said they had not consulted the congregation. The Presbytery resolved to refer the case to Synod, and hereby do refer it. It is reported that they have had the sacrament dispensed without the knowledge and concurrence of Presbytery. For two years past, Presbytery know little of either Mr. Graham or his congregation. During that time, neither he nor his elders have given any thing like a regular attendance to our meetings.

Rev. JOHN ALEXANDER is Moderator, and
JOHN PAUL, D. D., Clerk.

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY report, that since July, 1839, they have held six regular meetings, and one *pro re nata*. On the 30th of July, they ordained the Rev. Thomas Carlile to the office of the holy ministry, and the pastoral charge of the Rathfriland congregation; and on the 11th of Sept. they ordained the Rev. William Sweeny to the office of the holy ministry, and pastoral charge of the congregation of Ballylane. They have under their care, as students of Natural Philosophy, Messrs. R. Clokey and J. Lawson; and Henry S. M'Kee, Student of Theology, having been regularly transmitted from the Northern Presbytery, and having delivered the prescribed pieces of trial, was licensed on the 11th of March to preach the Gospel. They have

pleasure in recommending him to the notice of Synod, as a well-educated, talented preacher of the Gospel.

The vacant congregation of Grange has enjoyed the dispensation of the Lord's supper, and a considerable supply of the preaching of the Word, during the past year. On the 25th of June, a call from the congregation was presented to the Rev. Gordon T. Ewing, of which he accepted, and his installation is appointed to take place immediately after the meeting of Synod.

The Corenery congregation, they regret to report, is not in a prosperous state. A comfortable house of worship is erected, and nearly finished, on account of which there is a small debt. A considerable sum of arrear stipend is due to the Rev. W. Gibson, but on account of the state of feeling existing between Mr. Gibson and the congregation, and certain prevailing dissensions among them, the Presbytery judged it a measure of painful necessity to dissolve the pastoral relation between him and them. He was, accordingly, disannexed, on the 12th of November last.

Presbytery are sorry in having to report that, at its last meeting, the Rev. James Steen petitioned for a disannexion from the congregation of Dromore, as its pastor, on the ground of the unpromising and hopeless state of the congregation. The Presbytery, before taking up the case, thought it advisable to hold a visitation Presbytery at Dromore, for the purpose of investigating more particularly the state of the congregation, in order to decide on this matter: this meeting is to be held on the first Tuesday of August next.

The appointed days of thanksgiving and humiliation have been observed. The Lord's supper has been dispensed in five of the congregations this summer, and a regular dispensation of the ordinances of the Gospel is kept up. We have much cause of gratitude to the Church's glorious Head, that our department of the vineyard exhibits the appearance of regular organization; and we have some reason to cherish the hope, that, in a measure, the pleasure of the Lord is prospering in our hand.

The Rev. THOMAS CATHCART is Moderator, and the
Rev. JOHN HAWTHORNE, Clerk.

THE WESTERN PRESBYTERY report, that since the last annual meeting of Synod, they have held six regular meetings, the last of which was held at Londonderry, as a visitation Presbytery, for the congregation of Derry. They report with pleasure, that the people of that congregation, though labouring under some difficulties, continue steadfast in their attachment to a Covenanted Testimony, and enjoy the dispensation of Word and Sacrament. Presbytery found it necessary to tender unto them some advice, which, it is hoped, will be followed with beneficial results. They also report, that they have visited the congregations of Faughan and Broadlane, and have great pleasure in stating, respecting the former, that the Minister and Elders are attentive in the discharge of their duties, and that the congregation enjoys peace and prosperity.

The days of thanksgiving and fasting, appointed by Synod, have been observed. The sacrament of our Lord's supper has been dispensed in four of their congregations, and there is a prospect of having it dispensed in the remaining congregations, in the course of the season. Presbytery report, that the Missionary stations in Donegal, Omagh, and Binn, continue to manifest a promising appearance, but have to lament the want of means to bestow upon them the cultivation they would require.

The members of Presbytery still entertain the hope, from the attendance of their congregations on instituted ordinances, and the character which they maintain, that the pleasure of the Lord continues to prosper in their hands. They have to record, with heartfelt sorrow, the removal, by death, of the late Rev. Wm. Gamble, from the service of the Church militant, in the month of August last. The loss sustained by the congregation, of which he, for more than fifty years, had the over-sight, and by his co-Presbyters, who profited much by his wise and prudent counsels, will be long and deeply lamented. In every relation of life he was deservedly esteemed. He was not, however, removed, until he had obtained a character for piety and usefulness, rarely surpassed. Presbytery have to report, that the congregation formerly under his pastoral care is now divided, by mutual consent, and erected into two separate congregations. They farther report, that Mr. Samuel B. Stevenson was licensed to preach the everlasting Gospel, on the 10th of October last; and that Mr. James Neill, student, has emigrated to America.

The Rev. JOHN STOTT is their Moderator, and the
Rev. ALEXANDER BRITTEN, Clerk.

7. Minutes VI. and VIII. of Synod's proceedings last year are read. It is found that the Western and Southern Presbyteries are not in readiness to report, relative to the Testimony adopted by the Synod in Scotland; that some Sessions of the Eastern Presbytery are in readiness, and that the Northern Presbytery has made some progress. After various verbal statements have been made, as reasons of delay, it is agreed, that the matter be postponed till the next annual meeting of Synod, that the several Congregations, Sessions, and Presbyteries, may have time to examine the contents of the Testimony deliberately.

8. It is moved by Dr. Henry, and seconded by Dr. Paul, "That, along with the Scottish Testimony, the Formula of Ordination, and Terms of Communion, as adopted by our brethren in Scotland, be submitted to the subordinate Judicials of the Church of Ireland, to be reported on at the next annual meeting of Synod." Moved, as an amendment, by the Rev. J. Dick, and seconded by Mr. S. Jackson, Rul-

ing Elder, "That the Synod abide faithfully by both parts of its decision, contained in the VI. Minute of last year's proceedings, namely,—That the Synod recommend to the consideration of the Subordinate Judicatories the historical and doctrinal parts of the Testimony of the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Synod, with a view to their adoption by this Church, and that the papers now lying on the Synod's table be held *in retentis*, till the reports from the Inferior Judicatories be received and adjudicated upon.

The amendment is carried by 16 of a majority.

Against this decision, Rev. Drs. Paul and Henry, Rev. Messrs. Alexander, C. Houston, and J. Nevin protested, and promised to assign reasons.

About 1 o'clock, P. M., Dr. Stavelly, Rev. Messrs. Graham, Smyth and Simms, with John Graham and Wm. Wilson, Ruling Elders, appeared in Court, and their names were added to the roll.

Adjourned till 5 o'clock, P. M.

Wednesday, 5 o'clock, P. M.

The Synod meets and is constituted.

Rev. Gorden T. Ewing is now present; with James Orr, Elder, from the congregation of Faughan, and Robert Reid, from the vacancy of Grange.

9. On reference to Minutes VII and IX, of last year, the Financial Committee is appointed to meet at half-past 4 o'clock, to-morrow, P. M., to arrange payment for last year's Minutes, receive contributions to the Synodical Fund, and prepare to report the state of accounts due for Synod's pamphlet.

10. Minutes X and XXII of last year are read; and the Moderator states, that he had attended the examinations for the general certificate, in the Royal Belfast Institution.—There has not, as yet, any communication been received from the Faculty.

11. On referring to Minute XII, the Rev. T. Houston reads the duplicate of a letter to J. Ross, Hammersmith, Esq. which is approved.

12. It is agreed, that the last Thursday of November be observed by the members of Synod, and the people under their care, as a day of thanksgiving; and the last Thursday of January, 1841, as a day of fasting;—liberty of change being granted to those congregations that now apply for it.

It is moved by Rev. J. Smyth, and seconded by Mr. R. Witherhead, Ruling Elder, and unanimously agreed, That *causes*, for both occasions, be prepared, and published. Agreed, further,—That the Rev. J. Stott prepare a draught of causes of thanksgiving, and the Rev. S. Simms, a draught of causes of fasting, to be submitted to Synod at next meeting.

13. It is arranged, that the report of the Missionary Board be heard to-morrow, after the devotional exercises, and in connexion with it, the Rev. W. Sommerville's address; after which, the Court is to proceed with the examination of Theological students.

14. Agreed, that the next annual meeting of Synod be held in Belfast, on the 2d Tuesday of July, 1841, at 12 o'clock, noon.

15. Resolved, that the Synod meet as a Committee of Bills at 7 o'clock, to-morrow morning.

Adjourned by prayer.

Thursday, 10 o'clock, A. M.

The Synod meets and is constituted.

The Rev. T. Cathcart conducts the devotional exercises.

16. The Rev. Dr. Henry gives notice that he intends, at next meeting of Synod, to move,—That the Formula of Queries for Ordination and Terms of Communion, as embraced by the sister Synod in Scotland, be taken under deliberate consideration, by the Church in Ireland, with a view to their being adopted as a part of reformation attainments.

17. The Rev. T. Houston reads the twelfth annual report of the Missionary Board. Petitions from the congregation in Liverpool, and from the societies in Dublin and Manchester, are laid on the table.

The Rev. W. Sommerville addresses the Synod, giving a lengthened and interesting account of the civil and ecclesiastical position of the provinces, and of the progress and present state of the Covenanted Testimony there. The memorial from Liverpool is read, and the Rev. J. Nevin addresses the Court till the hour of adjournment.

Adjourned by prayer.

Thursday, 5 o'clock, P. M.

The Synod meets and is constituted.

Mr. Nevin resumes and concludes his address, giving an account of the present state and prospects of the congregation in Liverpool.

The report furnished by the Missionary Board is adopted, and ordered to be printed and circulated. It is moved by the Rev. J. Smyth, and seconded by Rev. J. Nevin,—That the Directors be requested to continue in office for another year; and that two respectable merchants be annually appointed to audit the accounts.

With this request the Directors comply: and it is agreed, that Rev. Thomas Carlile, Rev. S. Simms, with their Elders, James Thomson, and John Woods, and Dr. Henry, with Andrew Blakely, Elder, be added to their number.

The petitions from Manchester and Dublin are read; and several members address the Court on the subject of Missions.

18. About 9 o'clock, it is arranged that the examination of Students be commenced, in order that other important business may receive the attention of Synod to-morrow. The Court proceeds with the examination of Messrs. W. J. McDowell, Robert Nevin, and Stuart Fullerton, their certificates and class tickets having been read and regarded as satisfactory. The examination, when closed, is sustained, and they are recommended to the Northern Presbytery, to be taken under judicial trials for license.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock to-morrow, A. M.

Friday, 10 o'clock, A. M.

The Synod meets, and is constituted.

Rev. W. Sommerville conducts the devotional exercises.

19. Moved by Dr. Henry, and seconded by Dr. Paul,—That the House resolve itself into a committee, for the purpose of considering papers which had been already presented. Resolved accordingly.

About 1 o'clock, P. M. the Synod resumed its proceedings.

20. A statement is made respecting the Financial Committee. The Clerks of the Northern and Southern Presbyteries had settled with the Clerk of Synod for the number of copies of the Minutes of Synod, which they received respectively. The Clerks of the Eastern and Western Presbyteries made no report. The Committee was discharged, and it is agreed, that, in future, the Clerk of each Presbytery shall settle with the Clerk of Synod, for the number of copies of Minutes that may be sent to them.

The Treasurer of the Synod's Fund reports, that he has received the usual contributions from 20 of the congregations;

and that, by the direction of Synod, he has handed to Mr. William Moore the sum of £3 10s. to assist in settling the account due for the printing of Synod's pamphlet.

The Clerk of Synod requested and obtained leave of absence for a short time, on the ground of having been busily occupied,—having proposed that Mr. T. Houston should act as Clerk *pro tempore*.

21. A letter from the Faculty of the Royal Belfast Institution is laid on the table, and read.

Agreed, that the Moderator and the Rev. Thomas Houston prepare a reply.

22. Agreed, that the matter referred to in Minute XXI. of last year, be held *in retentis*.

23. Agreed that the prayer of the petitions from Dublin and Manchester be granted, as far as practicable. It is arranged that Manchester be supplied by the Southern Presbytery in September, by the Western Presbytery in March, and by the Northern Presbytery in April—Dublin to be supplied by the Southern Presbytery in December, by the Northern in January, and that the Lord's Supper be dispensed there on the last Sabbath of December, should the Society be found in a proper state.

24. At this stage of the proceedings, five Ministers of the Eastern Presbytery, with the Elders from four congregations, having been absent from the Court for a short time, returned to the house, and the Rev. Clarke Houston, one of the Ministers having asked leave to make a communication to the Court, read, in his own name, and in the name of other four Ministers of the Presbytery, of the Elders, and of Commissioners from four congregations, a paper, entitled a Declinature, containing reasons, and signed by the following persons:—

John Paul, D. D., William Henry, D. D., John Alexander, Clarke Houston, and John Nevin, Ministers ;—James Adrain, James Kinnear, John M'Cracken, Andrew Blakely, John M'Vicker, Elders ;—Malcom M'Cracken, John Roddy, Joseph Allen, Hugh Kernahan, Patrick M'Vicker, William Moore, Adam Gordon, and John Wilson, Commissioners.

This paper being laid on the table, the brethren withdrew from the house ; and as the hour of adjournment had already passed, the Moderator concluded in the usual way.

Friday, half past 5 o'clock, P. M.

The Synod meets, and is constituted.

On resuming business, the Rev. W. Sommerville addressed the Court, relative to the solemn circumstances in which the Synod had been placed. It was agreed, that the several congregations, under the inspection of Synod, should observe a day of Fasting, as soon as possible: the last Thursday of the present month was appointed for this purpose, with liberty of change to Wednesday, as may suit particular congregations.

25. It was proposed and agreed, that the Rev. John W. Graham be appointed Clerk of Synod.

26. In relation to the paper of Declinature and Reasons, the following resolution was adopted and ordered to be published. Resolved,—

“That this Synod disclaim and condemn any errors, calumnies and misrepresentations, if any such there be, in the publication, or publications, of any who are, or have been, Members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland; and that they do not hold themselves responsible for the principles or statements contained in publications referred to, in papers held *in retentis*, or in those that have been rejected, for the time, in the Committee of Bills.” From this resolution the Rev. Messrs. Britten, Ewing, and Steen *dissented*.

27. The Moderator, with Rev. Messrs. Cameron and Carlike, are appointed as a deputation to wait on the brethren who had withdrawn, to lay this resolution before them, and to entreat them to return to their duty, and to their place in Synod. Should this request not be complied with, they are instructed to require from Rev. Clarke Houston, the Synodical records now in his possession.

On returning, the deputation report, that in accordance with Synod's direction, they had waited on the brethren who had recently retired, who requested that a copy of the resolution should be transmitted to their ensuing meeting, on Saturday, the 25th inst.; expressed their willingness to return to Synod, as soon as the causes of separation were removed; and stated that the required records would be forwarded in due time. They likewise tendered to the Moderator their thanks for the Synod's attention in appointing the deputation.

28. In reference to Minute XXIV. of last year, it is agreed that in the present circumstances of the Synod, no proceedings be taken in the matter.

29. The Rev. J. Stott defers his motion respecting the organization of congregational Sabbath schools.

30. The Rev. J. Smyth's motion, referred to in Minute XXVI. of last year, is also deferred.

31. The Rev. J. Dick declines bringing forward his motion respecting the formation of a fifth Presbytery; and it was agreed, that it is now expedient that the congregation of Bailiesmill be placed under the inspection of another Presbytery.

Mr. Graham and his elder having intimated their desire, and that of the congregation, to be connected with the Southern Presbytery, they were accordingly transferred, and the requisite credentials are ordered to be given them.

32. In relation to the case of Corenery, it was recommended, that a collection should be taken up, as soon as practicable, in every congregation, for the purpose of liquidating the debt contracted in building the House of Worship at that place.

Adjourned, till 7 o'clock, to-morrow morning.

Saturday, 7 o'clock, A. M.

The Synod meets, and is constituted.

33. The Moderator, with Dr. Stavelly, of the Northern Presbytery; Rev. Messrs. Britten and Stott, of the Western Presbytery; with Rev. Messrs. Graham and Cathcart, (alternate) Mr. Ewing, of the Southern Presbytery, are appointed a Committee, to take charge of the paper of Declinature and Reasons, correspond with the Synod in Scotland, and watch over the concerns of the church generally. This committee to hold its first meeting at Coleraine, on the 2d of September next. Mr. Watt, Convener.

34. The Report of the Synod's Committee, in the case of the congregation of Ballyclare, is read and approved. It is agreed, that the congregation remain under the care of the Committee.

35. The following arrangements were made respecting the labors of the Licentiates:—

Under the direction of the MISSIONARY BOARD.

Mr. Stevenson, in October, November, and May: Mr. R. Johnston, in May and June. And both to be the remaining part of the time, till next meeting of Synod, in the bounds of the Western Presbytery.

Mr. A. M'Leod Stavelly to be in the bounds of the West-

ern Presbytery, during the whole of the time, till next meeting of Synod, with the exception of a few Sabbaths, on which he is to be in the Northern Presbytery.

Mr. Henry S. M'Kee to be in the Western Presbytery during the month of October.

At half-past nine o'clock, A. M. the Synod is adjourned with prayer, by the Moderator, until the next annual meeting.

(Signed,)

JOHN W. GRAHAM,
SYNOD'S CLERK.

JOHN KNOX'S SERMON BEFORE QUEEN MARY.

(Continued from p. 273.)

The prophet transfers all the promises of God to himself, saying, "Even my dead body shall arise;" and immediately after, gives commandment and charge to the dwellers in the dust, that is, to the dead carcases of those that were departed, (for the spirit and soul of man dwells not in the dust,) "That they should awake, that they should sing and rejoice;" for they should arise and spring up from the earth, even as the herbs do, after they have received the dew from above.

Time will not suffer that these particulars be so largely treated as they ought, and as I gladly would do; therefore let us consider, that the prophet, in transferring the power and promise of God to himself, does not claim to himself any particular prerogative above the people of God, as that he alone should live and arise, and not they also; but he does it, to let them understand that he taught a doctrine whereof he was certain; yea, and whereof they should have experience after his death. As if he should say, "My words appear to you now to be incredible, but the day will come, that I shall be taken from you, my carcase shall be enclosed in the bosom of the earth; and you shall be led away captives to Babylon, where you shall remain many days and years, as it were buried in your sepulchres.

But then call to mind what I said unto you before hand, that my body shall arise; even so shall you rise from your graves out of Babylon, and be restored to your own country,

and city of Jerusalem ; this, I doubt not, is the true meaning of the prophet. The charge that he gives to the dwellers in the dust, is to express the power of God's word, whereby he not only gives life, where death apparently had prevailed ; but also, by it, he calls things that are not, even as though they were. True it is, that the prophet Isaiah saw not the destruction of Jerusalem, much less could he see the restitution of it with his corporeal eyes ; but he leaves this, as it were, in testament with them—that when they were in the extremity of all bondage, they should call to mind what the prophet of God had before spoken.

And lest that his doctrine, and this promise of God made unto them by his mouth, should have been forgotten, as we are ever prone and ready to forget God's promises when we are pressed with any sorrow, God raised up unto them, in the midst of their calamity, his prophet Ezekiel, unto whom, among many other visions, he gave this—The hand of the Lord first led him in a place, which was full of dry and dispersed bones. Ezek. xxxvii. The question was demanded of the prophet, If these bones, being wondrous dry, could live ? The prophet answered, The knowledge thereof appertained unto God. Charge was given unto him, that he should speak unto the dry bones and say, “ Thus saith the Lord God to these bones, Behold, I will give you breath, and you shall live : I will give unto you sinews, flesh, and skin, and you shall live.” And while the prophet spake as he was commanded, he heard a voice, and he saw every bone join its fellow ; he saw them covered with flesh and skin, albeit there was no spirit of life in them. He was commanded again to speak, and to say, “ Thus saith the Lord, Come O Spirit, from the four quarters, and blow on these that are slain, that they may live.” And as he prophesied, the spirit of life came ; they lived, and stood upon their feet. Then the Lord interprets what this vision meant, saying “ O son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, Our bones are dried, our hope is perished, we are plainly cut off. But behold, saith the Lord, I will open your graves, I will bring you forth of them, ye shall live, and come unto the land of Israel, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.”

This vision, I say, given to the prophet, and by the prophet preached to the people, when they thought that God had utterly forgotten them, compelled them more diligently to

advert to what the former prophets had spoken. It is no doubt but that they carried with them both the prophecy of Isaiah and Jeremiah, so that the prophet Ezekiel is a commentary to these words of Isaiah, where he saith, "Thy dead, O Lord, shall live, with my body they shall arise."—The prophet brings in this similitude of the dew, to answer unto that part of their fidelity, who can believe no further of God's promises than they are able to apprehend by natural judgment; as if he would say, Think ye this impossible, that God should give life unto you, and bring you to an estate of a commonwealth again, after that ye are dead, and as it were rased from the face of the earth? But why do you not consider what God worketh from year to year in the order of nature? Sometimes you see the face of the earth decked and beautified with herbs, flowers, grass and fruits; again you see the same utterly taken away by storms, and the vehemence of the winter; what does God to replenish the earth again, and to restore the beauty thereof? He sends down his small and soft dew, the drops whereof, in their descending, are neither great nor visible, and yet thereby are the pores and secret veins of the earth, which before by vehemence of frost and cold were shut up, opened again, and so does the earth produce again the like herbs, flowers, and fruits. Shall you then think, that the dew of God's heavenly grace will not be as effectual in you to whom he hath made his promise, as it is in the herbs and fruits which from year to year bud forth and decay? If you do so, the prophet would say your unbelief is inexcusable; because you neither rightly weigh the power, nor the promise of your God.

The like similitude the apostle Paul uses against such as called the resurrection in doubt, because by natural judgment they could not apprehend that flesh once putrified, and dissolved as it were into other substance, should rise again, and return again to the same substance and nature: "O fool," saith he, "that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare corn, as it falleth, of wheat, or some other, but God giveth it a body as it pleaseth him, even to every seed his own body." In which words and sentence, the apostle sharply rebukes the gross ignorance of the Corinthians, who began to call in doubt the chief article of our faith, the resurrection of the flesh after it was once dis-

solved, because that natural judgment, as he said, reclaimed thereto.* He reproves, I say, their gross ignorance, because they might have seen and considered some proof and document thereof in the very order of nature ; for albeit the wheat, or other corn, cast in the earth, appears to die or putrify, and so to be lost, yet we see that it is not perished, but that it fructifies according to God's will and ordinance.

Now, if the power of God be so manifest in raising up of the fruits of the earth, unto which no particular promise is made by God, what shall be his power and virtue in raising up our bodies, seeing that thereto he is bound by the solemn promise of Jesus Christ his Eternal Wisdom, and the Verity itself that cannot lie ? Yea, seeing that the members must once communicate with the glory of the Head, how shall our bodies, which are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones, lie still for ever in corruption, seeing that our Head, Jesus Christ, is now exalted in his glory ? Neither yet is this power and good-will of God to be restrained unto the last and general resurrection only, but we ought to consider it in the marvellous preservation of his church, and in the raising up of the same from the very bottom of death, when by tyrants it has been oppressed from age to age.

Now, of the former words of the prophet, we have to gather this comfort ; that if at any time we see the face of the church within this realm so defaced, as I think it shall be sooner than we look for—when we shall see, I say, virtue to be despised, vice to be maintained, the verity of God to be impugned, lies and men's inventions holden in authority—and finally, when we see the true religion of our God, and the zealous observers of the same, trodden under the feet of such as in their heart say, that “There is no God,” (Psalm xiv.) ; let us then call to mind what have been the wondrous works of our God from the beginning—that it is his proper office to bring light out of darkness, order out of confusion, life out of death ; and finally, that this is He that calleth things that are not, even as if they were, as before we have heard. And if in the day of our temptation, which in my judgment approaches fast, we are thus armed, if our incredulity cannot utterly be removed, yet shall it so be corrected, that damnable despair oppress us not. But now let us hear how the prophet proceeds :—

* Cried out against it.

"Come, thou my people, enter within thy chambers, shut thy door after thee, hide thyself a very little while, until the indignation pass over."

Here the prophet brings in God, lovingly, calling upon his people to come to himself, and to rest with him, until such time as the fury and sharp plagues should be executed upon the wicked and disobedient. It may appear at the first sight, that all these words of the prophet, in the person of God, calling the people unto rest, are spoken in vain ; for we neither find chambers nor rest, more prepared for the dearest children of God, so far as man's judgment can discern, than for the rebellious and disobedient ; for such as fell not by the edge of the sword, or died not of pestilence, or by hunger, were either carried captives unto Babylon, or else departed afterwards into Egypt, so that none of Abraham's seed had either chamber or quiet place to remain in within the land of Canaan. For the resolution hereof, we must understand, That albeit the chambers whereunto God called his chosen be not visible, yet notwithstanding they are certain, and offer unto God's children a quiet habitation in spirit, howsoever the flesh be travailed and tormented.

The chambers then are God's sure promises, unto which God's people are commanded to resort ; yea, within which they are commanded to close themselves in the time of greatest adversity. The manner of speaking is borrowed from that judgment and foresight which God has printed in this our nature ; for when men espy great tempests appearing to come, they will not willingly remain uncovered in the fields, but straightway they will draw them to their houses or holds, that they may escape the vehemence of the same ; and if they fear any enemy pursues them, they will shut their doors, to the end that the enemy should not suddenly have entry.

After this manner God speaks to his people ; as if he should say, The tempest that shall come upon this whole nation shall be so terrible, that nothing but extermination shall appear to come upon the whole body. But thou my people, that hearest my word, believest the same, and tremblest at the threatenings of my prophets, now, when the world does insolently resist—let such, I say, enter within the secret chamber of my promises, let them contain themselves quietly there ; yea, let them shut the door upon them, and suffer not infidelity, the mortal enemy of my truth, and of my peo-

ple that depend thereupon, to have free entry to trouble them, yea, further to murder, in my promise; and so shall they perceive that my indignation shall pass, and that such as depend upon me shall be saved.

Thus we may perceive the meaning of the prophet;—whereof we have first to observe, that God acknowledges them for his people who are in the greatest affliction: yea, such as are reputed unworthy of men's presence are yet admitted within the secret chamber of God. Let no man think that flesh and blood can suddenly attain to that comfort; and therefore most expedient it is, that we be frequently exercised in meditation of the same. Easy it is, I grant, in time of prosperity, to say, and to think, that God is our God, and that we are his people; but when he has given us over into the hands of our enemies, and turned, as it were, his back unto us, then, I say, still to reclaim him to be our God, and to have this assurance, that we are his people, proceeds wholly from the Holy Spirit of God, as it is the greatest victory of faith, which overcomes the world; for increase whereof, we ought continually to pray.

This doctrine we shall not think strange, if we consider how suddenly our spirits are carried away from our God, and from believing his promise. So soon as any great temptation apprehends us, then we begin to doubt if ever we believed God's promise, if God will fulfil them to us, if we abide in his favor, if he regards and looks upon the violence and injury that is done unto us; and a multitude of such cogitations which before lurked quietly in our corrupted hearts, burst violently forth when we are oppressed with any desperate calamity. Against which this is the remedy—once to apprehend, and still to retain God to be our God, and firmly to believe, that we are his people whom he loves, and will defend, not only in affliction, but even in the midst of death itself.

Again, let us observe, That the judgments of our God never were, nor yet shall be so vehement upon the face of the earth, but that there has been, and shall be, some secret habitation prepared in the sanctuary of God, for some of his chosen, where they shall be preserved until the indignation pass by; and that God prepares a time that they may glorify him again, before the face of the world which once despised them. And this ought to be unto us no small comfort in these appearing dangers, namely, that we are surely persua-

ded, that how vehement soever the tempest shall be, it yet shall pass over, and some of us shall be preserved to glorify the name of our God, as is aforesaid.

(To be continued.)

PROCEEDINGS OF THE OHIO PRESBYTERY, WITH REMARKS.

Rev. Sir—

The defection and apostacy of Messrs. Lusk and Steele, are generally known throughout the church. But the question is frequently asked, Are these men at liberty to exercise their office? or has the Presbytery to which they belonged taken any notice of their conduct? That all persons may know the situation in which these men are, I send you a statement of the Presbytery's proceedings relative to their case.

At the last meeting of the Ohio Presbytery at Brushcreek, Sept. 17, 1840, the committee which had been appointed, at a previous meeting of the Presbytery, to prepare a libel and cite them to appear, reported that they had discharged the duty imposed on them, and presented a copy of the libel and citation.

The report was adopted. The court then proceeded and obtained satisfactory evidence that a copy of the libel and citation had been served upon Rev. R. Lusk and D. Steele. They did not attend. It was on motion resolved, that they be again cited to appear on Saturday, at 9 o'clock, A. M. and that James C. McIntire, in company with Robert Wright and Jno. M. McIntire, serve the citation.

Saturday, 9 o'clock, A. M.—Mr. McIntire reported that he had served the citations upon both the Rev. D. Steele and R. Lusk. Robert Wright and J. M. McIntire testified to the fact.

They still persisted in their course and refused to attend. It was then on motion resolved, that they be again cited to appear at 4 o'clock P. M.—that Mr. Burns, in company with Mr. Milligan and Mr. Thompson serve the citation.

At 4 o'clock, P. M. Mr. Burns gave satisfactory evidence that he had served the citation upon Messrs. Lusk and Steele. They still refused to attend. The Presbytery pro-

ceeded, and the following preamble and resolutions, were, after mature deliberation, adopted.

“Whereas it is notorious that the Rev. Robert Lusk and the Rev. David Steele have, without the knowledge, consent, or authority of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, constituted an irregular and independent Presbytery, and for some time past have followed other divisive courses in violation of their solemn ordination vows,—and

Whereas they have been guilty of slandering the Ministers and courts of the Lord’s house, thereby fostering contention and strife among the members of the church, and destroying that unity and peace which they were bound to promote,—and

Whereas the above named persons have been three times legally cited to appear before this Court and answer to the libel preferred against them; and they have still refused, thereby adding contempt to their former irregular and sinful conduct.

Therefore, Resolved, that the Rev. Robert Lusk and the Rev. David Steele be, and hereby are, *in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*, suspended from the exercise of their office; and from the privileges of the church, until by confession of their sin, and satisfactory repentance, they return to duty.

Resolved, That the above preamble and resolution be read by the Moderator on Monday* in the public congregation.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this Presbytery, in so far as they relate to the case of Robert Lusk and David Steele, be forwarded to the Editor of the Reformed Presbyterian for publication.

Attest,

JOHN WALLACE, Clerk.

The conduct of these men furnishes additional testimony to the fact that “the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.” As for Mr. Lusk, he is the same man he ever was. There is no change either in disposition or in sentiment, and until such is effected the church loses nothing by his departure. Ever since his restoration he has been a terror to the people. The very tidings of his coming, excited indignation at those who sent him. It is otherwise with Mr. Steele. He is changed. That gentleness and meek-

*The day after the administration of the Lord’s Supper in Brushcreek congregation.

ness of temper for which he was thought to stand before others have given place to sternness and moroseness. And that "integrity of purpose," and honesty which he complains he could not exercise in Synod have given way to selfishness.

In testimony of this, we have but to look at his conduct in Synod, after he had made the discovery that he could, as he says, "no longer act the part of an *honest man*," and at his action since, in surreptitiously bearing away all the minutes and papers of the Presbytery to which he belonged. In 1833, there was no man more indignant at the Clerk of Synod, when he refused to give up the minutes and papers of General Synod than Mr. Steele. He could scarcely find terms in the English language to express his abhorrence of the dishonesty of that man—none censured his conduct in more unmeasured terms. Yet in 1840, this same man can bear away the minutes and papers of the Ohio Presbytery—and when asked to give them up, indignantly declare that no honest person or court could make such an unreasonable *requisition*. He would not give them.

We once thought of this man, as Peter thought of himself. Though all should deny his Lord, yet would not he. We supposed, though others should trample the attainments of our fathers into the earth, he would cleave to their dust.—The time was, when he would have been among the last whom we would have suspected for bringing a stain upon God's covenanted cause. But what is man? The world does not know him, nor does he know himself, until he meets a temptation that accords with his predominant disposition.

W. J.

LETTER FROM REV. WM. SLOANE.

Princeton, Indiana, Sep. 7th, 1840.

The Session of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Princeton, being met and constituted by prayer, it was resolved, that whereas our present Moderator, Rev. Wm. Sloane, did on Saturday last, after explaining the Terms of Communion, read an extract of a letter which he wrote in the fall of 1833 to Rev. Gavin McMillan, the Session request the Moderator to send said extract to the Editor of the Reformed Presbyterian for publication in that periodical. The following is the extract:

"The disorderly conduct of the Old Lights is alleged by some as a reason for not joining them. Let us for a moment examine this sub-

ject. In 1831, Dr. Wylie and his coadjutors got a packed Synod.— (See Acts of Assembly, 1638, Session 12th, Art. 7th, item 6th.) By this means they got the act of *free discussion* passed—an act certainly “more honored in the breach than in the observance.” After doing his utmost (as I have been informed) to keep the subject of our civil relations from being discussed in Synod, Dr. Wylie did, immediately after the court adjourned, preach in direct opposition to our testimony.— Next came the Pastoral address. When this was read in Synod Rev. Wm. L. Roberts alleged, that it was not agreeable to the standards of our church. This he proved by extracts from our testimony, &c.

The contempt of court, which Dr. Wylie manifested, in calling upon the minority to follow him and take measures for the publication of the whole of the address, you know. Next came McMaster’s four letters, then Dr. Wylie’s voting and getting himself naturalized. These things induced some of our brethren to request a *pro re nata* meeting of the E. Sub. Synod.

Against the legality of this meeting the New Lights urge several reasons: 1st.—Nothing had arisen *de novo*. 2nd.—The call of the Moderator was informal. 3rd.—A number of ministers protested against it as unnecessary.

1. To the first it is replied, that the act of free discussion limited those discussions to the pages of the Expositor; that this being attended with no extra expense, the rich who were convenient to the press, and the poor who were at a distance, might have equal advantages. This regulation was not attended to by either Dr. Wylie or Dr. McMaster. Dr. Wylie’s voting and getting himself naturalized was something *de novo*.

2. To the second it is replied, The *pro re nata* had a right to take cognizance of the business specified in the citation, and any other that might arise out of *that*.

3. To the third it is replied, 1st, their protesting against the meeting was judging in their own cause. 2nd, the highest insult that can be offered to any court is to question its authority; and though the proceeding might have been deemed rigorous, it could not have been deemed disorderly, if the court had, without further process, suspended them for contumacy. This they did not do; they only found libels against them, and referred the prosecution of them to the stated meeting.

As to the suspension of Rev. J. N. McLeod, I observe every court has authority over its own members. See Matt. xviii. 15–20; proceedings of Assembly, 1638, in relation to the bishops; and of Synod of 1825 in the case of Mr. Lusk.

It is alleged that it was insulting ministers to cite them to attend a court for trying themselves. Reply,—What would have been said if the court had met and tried them without giving them notice?

Come we now to the stated meeting of E. S. Synod, April, 1833. The new party have said a great deal about the tumult and disorder of this meeting. Pray, who caused the tumult and disorder? But it is alleged that the Moderator called the meeting a continuation of the

pro re nata. I reply, substantially it was, formally it was not. Dr. Wylie, having succeeded in throwing the court into confusion, laid hold of the opportunity to draw them into a dilemma, by asking whether it was the stated meeting or a continuation of the *pro re nata*. If the Moderator said the first, then they would insist that Mr. McLeod was still clerk; if the latter, then they denied the legality of the meeting. But Mr. McLeod might have been suspended for any other crime—he might have been dead. Must he then have been considered clerk of the April meeting because he was of that held in October?

A regular *pro re nata* is the Synod. A stated meeting is the same. In that point of view the stated meeting was a continuation of the *pro re nata*. But after all, what had the Moderator's reply to do with the legality of the meeting? The New Lights submitted to the constitution; remained in the court till they found the vote going against them; *ran away!* assembled in 6th street church; chose a moderator, and, *without constituting*, proceeded to transact synodical business,—still acknowledging the constitution in Chambers street. The E. S. Synod proceeded, in their case, as the General Synod had done in the case of Mr. Lusk in 1825.

Now, dear sir, if the New Lights are so tenacious of order as they profess, why did they not attend the *pro re nata* and protest and appeal to General Synod? or, why did they not protest and appeal from the stated meeting? Mr. Wylie, in conversation with me in Philadelphia, asked me whether I could in conscience acknowledge the *pro re nata* as a regular court. I replied that I would always sustain as valid the proceedings of our courts, while there is neither protest nor appeal nor reference from them.

Again, dear sir, examine their own minutes, and tell me whether they did not hang the *pro re nata* first and try it afterward. They require of us to declare it illegal, and all its acts null and void. When met in Synod they proceeded to try it. To try a court which they had previously pronounced illegal—a court from which there was taken no appeal, no protest, no reference!!

Let us now consider the meeting of Synod in Philadelphia. We have seen that the new party recognized the constitution of the Synod in Chambers street, April 9th. I take it for granted that each of the parties has given a correct statement of their *numbers*. Dr. Wylie's party were a minority. They were suspended by the majority of a court whose constitution they had acknowledged, and in which they had sat and deliberated. I will not insult your understanding by asking whether a majority of a court holding their original principles, or the minority who have abandoned those principles, is the court.

The ground assumed by Mr. N. Johnston and myself at the convention in Mr. Sterling's, was, that the new party in the E. S. Synod were *suspended*, whether righteously or unrighteously we pretended not to say; but we did not consider it competent to us, in our private capacity, to nullify the acts of a regularly constituted court. We proposed, however, to waive the subject; and asked, not as a matter of

right, but of courtesy, that Dr. Black or your brother should open the Synod. This was indignantly rejected by the new party, on the ground that a Synod constituted by any other than the Moderator, or his alternate, would be illegal and its acts null and void. Yet Dr. Black had to acknowledge that he constituted Synod when he was neither Moderator nor alternate. Dr. Black further informed us that he and Mr. Crawford would be the only members of court, that would be known as such, till the commissions were examined—that the Philadelphia Presbytery was the first on their list—that they would sustain the commission of every delegate from that Presbytery—that they would reject the commission of every member of the *pro re nata*; and for the others they would do with them as they might see cause.

When we had heard these absurd and insulting proposals we, the Western members present, returned with heavy hearts to inform our Eastern brethren of the result of our conference. Perceiving that all hope of meeting in an orderly way was gone; *knowing*, too, that they had bespoken police officers to take us into custody if we should oppose their measures, we agreed to spend the day, on the evening of which Synod was to meet, in fasting and prayer. The result of our deliberations was, that as they would yield nothing to courtesy, we would claim our right, and not submit to have Synod constituted by a suspended minister.

It is alleged by the new party that we could know nothing of Mr. Crawford's suspension, as a Synod, till the Synod was constituted. Admitted. And could we know any one thing under the sun, as a Synod, till the Synod was constituted? Suppose Mr. Crawford had been dead, could we have known it as a Synod before we were a Synod? But it is said you would have seen he was not there. True; but it would have been as individuals, not as a Synod. Till the Synod was constituted we could only judge as individuals. This we did; and our judgment was, that an Alternate in regular standing is a more eligible character to constitute a court than a Moderator under suspension, even if that suspension might be wrong, while there can be an appeal to a higher court. The fact of Mr. Crawford's suspension we knew as individuals; our judgment of that fact we suspended till it should come before us in a judicative capacity.

They call us seceders. From what did we secede? Not from Reformation principles; this is confessed by all, even our enemies being judges. Not from the Reformed Presbyterian Synod of North America: for we, being an overwhelming majority, (36 to 22,) gave public notice where we would assemble. Did we secede from the New Lights? No; their court was not constituted when we left them. The city of Philadelphia was the place appointed for the meeting of Synod, and there we met.

Now, dear sir, consider the conduct of the other party. Look at a session, suspending two elders and their adherents (in number about 140) *without a trial*. Look at professed ministers of the gospel travelling pest on the Lord's day to force a minister on a congregation by

the aid of the city police. Look at a minority withdrawing from Synod, and, *without constituting*, pretending to transact synodical business. Look at the cruel, scurrilous and unprovoked attack made on Dr. Willson in the notes to the Pastoral Address. Look at a minority of Pittsburgh Presbytery meeting in the basement story of Dr. Wylie's church, and appointing themselves delegates to Synod. Look at the spirit of the several documents appended to their minutes.

They accuse us of unwillingness to have the grand question discussed. From what I have stated, it appears it was discussed at the reading of the Pastoral Address. Drs. Wylie and McMaster had written on one side, Messrs. Scott, Gibson and others on the opposite. Before these last, the New Light sophisms had proved *like a thread of tow when it toucheth the fire*.

Hence, as Mr. Steele expresses it, 'dreading a more ignominious exposure before a higher court,' they used every artifice which they could devise to avoid meeting with their brethren, to discuss the subject of civil relations. Hence their protests, instead of personal appearance at the *pro re nata*. Hence their disorderly meeting in 6th street, New-York. Hence their proposals to us in Mr. Sterling's, Philadelphia."

The Session of Princeton congregation are aware that the substance of this letter, and far more, has been published; but as they are still pestered with the New Light quibbles, and as it might meet the eye of many in the Reformed*Presbyterian who have seen nothing else on the subject, they think its publication might be useful. "Silence grows criminal when crimes grow strong."

While writing to you I have another thing to mention, though not connected with the above. It is stated, in what Mr. Sproull calls a *Rabshakeh* pamphlet, that I swore the oath of naturalization. *It is a lie*. I never either swore or affirmed to any civil constitution either in Europe or America. Please to publish this for the satisfaction of our friends.

WM. SLOANE.

THE WAR IN THE EAST.

The latest intelligence shows that Mehemet Ali is likely to be entirely unsuccessful in his contest with the Allied Powers. In an engagement on the 10th Oct. he was completely defeated, with a loss of 7,000 in killed, wounded and taken prisoners. Beyrout was evacuated; the camp at Djuni Bay was broken up; revolt was spreading among his troops and throughout the mountainous regions; all the north of Mt. Lebanon, with the exception of Tripoli, is said to be in the power of the insurgents. It seems to be settled that France will not interfere, a change of Ministry having taken place mainly on the war question, and the speech of the king at the opening of the Chambers on the 5th ult. expressing confidence in the continuing of peace. The prospect is that Mehemet Ali will have to submit to whatever terms the Allied Powers propose, and that the peace of Europe may not for a while be materially interrupted.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

JANUARY, 1841.

No. XI.

REVIEWS, &c.

I. *Testimony by the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland.*

II. *Sermons by the late Rev. David Armstrong, Pastor of the first Reformed Presbyterian congregation, Glasgow.*

The former of these works is a re-exhibition of the testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland ; it forms a handsome duodecimo volume of upwards of four hundred pages; nearly two hundred of which are devoted to the history of the church. It is a work of great excellence, and does honor to the ecclesiastical judicatory by which it has been emitted. The Scottish Synod has for a long time, it is well known, had this work in view; and every reasonable expectation we think must have been realized by its publication. It harmonizes entirely with the "Act, declaration and testimony" first published by the church, eighty years ago. It is not then, a new testimony; but the same testimony re-exhibited in a fuller and more enlarged form. The testimony in its original form, is a work of uncommon merit; bearing the impress of extraordinary mental vigor, in the comprehensiveness of its doctrinal statements, and the acuteness of the reasonings by which its views are sustained. But it is frequently too much condensed, and always too abstract in the form of its reasonings, for popular use. In these respects, the testimony in its present form has decidedly the advantage, as well as in the analysis which is given of the doctrines which it contains. These are presented in a manner similar to the doctrinal part of the "Exhibition of Reforma-

tion principles" in the United States. We lay before our readers an extract from the historical part which may give them some idea of the manner in which the work is executed; it respects the civil government of Great Britain.

"It wants those scriptural qualifications, without which a union between church and state can neither be lawful nor beneficial. The constitution provides, that a certain number of Episcopal clergymen, under the title of "lords spiritual," shall form a constituent part of the legislature. It provides for the perpetual establishment of prelacy in England and Ireland. It provides, that an undisguised *supremacy* over the churches in these kingdoms shall be perpetually maintained as an inherent right of the Crown; and that the ultimate control over all ecclesiastical matters in them, shall belong to the kingdom and parliament. All these things we regard not only as immoral and pernicious, but as palpably anti-christian; and as having produced, to a lamentable extent, even under the profession of a protestant faith, and an orthodox creed, the very same effects which, for centuries, have flowed from the corruptions of Romanism. We protest against the formation of a union between the church of Christ and a state which embodies such flagrant immoralities in its constitution; which confounds the distinction between church and state; which robs the churches of their liberty, and places the reins of government, indiscriminately, in the hands of the pious or the profane, the christian or the infidel, as they may possess talents or influence to raise themselves to power. To men possessing scriptural qualifications, the very terms of office in Britain have been such as to render power wholly inaccessible. That good men have, occasionally, co-operated in carrying on the government, we have no disposition to deny. It is sufficient to justify our position to observe, that even these good men, on receiving office, must have bound themselves to maintain inviolate an immoral constitution, and to perpetuate those laws, by the operation of which the church and religion have suffered incalculable injury.

It was, therefore, in our view, a capital error in the revolution church, to cleave to an alliance with a civil government, which was not constituted in conformity to scripture, and which was composed of men altogether unworthy of such an alliance."

We extract another passage. It relates to "the increase of members in the Reformed Presbyterian Church." Having stated that this "has been, at all periods, and in all countries, comparatively slow," it is added, "if a religious profession may be estimated by the standard of numbers, the truth of God would have small honor. Among protestant churches it will be found that the most corrupt can boast of the greatest number of members. Popery, also, in this respect, outstrips Protestantism ; and Paganism outstrips them both.— Had the judicatories of this church been chiefly solicitous for an increase of members, they would have adopted a line of policy, in many respects, the reverse of what they have followed. They would have embraced no principle which could encumber any man in the pursuit of worldly honor and distinction. They would have been more tender of the vices of men, and especially of the opulent and powerful. They would have contented themselves with recommending the practice of religion to their people ; but by no means have insisted on the actual performance of religious duties, in the family and in the church as an indispensable qualification for church fellowship. They would have preached against sin, while, with little scruple, they dispensed the special privileges of Christ's house to almost every class of transgressors, without demanding, or waiting for satisfactory evidence of repentance, or subjecting to public censure. By such expedients as these, we feel confident that a larger share of popular favor might have been secured ; but in the same proportion should this church have forfeited all claim to be regarded as a *witnessing church*, and have failed in answering the design for which, as we conceive, she has been heretofore preserved.

Under the deep conviction that the world is in a state of revolt from the authority of God, and of active opposition to the kingdom of his Son, it has been the constant study of this church to mark and testify against the various outbreaks of disaffection and disloyalty, which have been exhibited in society. And as the complex system of anti-christian delusion is the great master-contrivance of the prince of darkness, it has been her earnest endeavor to testify against this system, in all its forms and ramifications—whether appearing in the church or in the state, whether in the unmitigated grossness and deformity of Popery itself, or in the more specious and deceptive combinations by which the elements of it have been

incorporated with protestant institutions. In such an employment, it would have been unwarrantable to expect a multitude of companions. Nothing can be more clearly indicated in prophecy, than that, during the whole period of the reign of Antichrist, the number of true christians within the territory of the man of sin shall be small ; and the number of those who shall keep themselves free from all fellowship with the corrupt system still smaller. While the exalted Redeemer preserves for himself two witnesses clothed in sackcloth to plead his cause, the whole world wonders after the beast."

The second of the works which form the heading of this article, is a volume of excellent sermons by the late Mr. Armstrong of Glasgow. They have been published since the death of that highly respectable minister of the gospel ; and form a monument to his memory, as "a workman that needed not to be ashamed." The sermons contain a great variety of subjects, prepared and delivered, mostly, in the course of ordinary pulpit ministration : and without the most distant design of their ever being laid before the public through the medium of the press. Had the highly-gifted author prepared them in view of publication, they would have come before the public with greater advantage ; but, even with all these disadvantages, the sermons need no apology. In some respects these circumstances add to the interest of the volume. They are not the effort of a man who has publication in view ; but, the faithful labors of one, in his every-day ministry.—Written as they have been without any design of publication, some of the sermons are not complete. In giving these to the public, the editor has not, in our judgment, done sufficient justice to the author, especially as there were abundance of sermons in a finished state among his manuscripts.

Prefixed to the volume is an interesting, though brief memoir of Mr. Armstrong, by the editor. We give our readers an extract from one of the sermons. The text is 2 Tim. iii. 1. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." The sermon was preached to his congregation by the author, while the Popish emancipation bill was in progress in the British parliament. We might have selected other paragraphs superior, perhaps, but we prefer giving this, because of the importance and peculiarity of the subject.—The plan of the discourse is "to specify a few of those things which render the times peculiarly perilous." The quotation is the seventh of a series of nine remarks. The observation

by which it is introduced to the reader is that "affording countenance to those who are the enemies of truth renders the times perilous."

"This is an evil which we often find condemned in the word of God. All association with idolators was prohibited; as this was calculated to prove a snare unto them—all connexion with them, or assistance given to them, was forbidden. 2 Chron. xix. 2. Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord. 2 Chron. xx. 35—37. If all help granted to them,—if all connexion with them, even in civil pursuits, was of a criminal and dangerous nature; can it be a proper measure under the New Testament, to unite in confederacy? Can it be safe not only to unite with, but to exalt them to places of power and authority? And we conceive that the measures now pursued for removing every impediment out of the way, that Papists may be admitted to legislate in our houses of parliament, render our times peculiarly perilous. That such measures are in agitation, all are aware; 'that the kings of the earth have set themselves, and princes are combined, to plot against the Lord and his anointed'—and that there are men of every rank, who are resolved to lend their influence to the man of sin.

That the officers of state should betray the trust that has been committed to them, and violate every pledge which they had given is not strange. 'For on each side walk the wicked, when vile men are high in place;' and those who violate the laws of God, will pay little deference to the laws of man—that those destitute of religion should regard with approbation, any change that may injure its interests, is not wonderful; but that there should be protestant ministers—that there should be Presbyterians found to act so base a part as to plead for Baal, and to advocate national incorporation with idolators, is indeed wonderful; and not more wonderful than humiliating. Have they forgotten all that our country suffered from Papal tyranny, cruelty, and violence?—Have they no respect for the memory of those immolated at the shrine of Papal supremacy—no regard for that deliverance which the Lord wrought by his power? No veneration for those illustrious dead, who erected the barriers under which safety hath been so long enjoyed? And what are the powerful reasons which they urge for giving power and influence to the avowed enemies of the truth—the irreconcila-

ble foes of all who profess it? They say that they are entitled to it. On what principle? If they have a right to authority, whence is it derived? Is it a natural right? It cannot be maintained; no man has a natural right to civil authority—office does not exist in a natural state. In this state he has a right to the protection of his person—his property, and character; but can possess no abstract right to the possession of civil office or political power. These offices are the creation of civil authority for the benefit of society at large; not for the gratification or emolument of those who hold them, and they for whose benefit these offices are appointed, have a right to declare what shall be qualifications of those who enjoy them.

This measure is condemned by the law and authority of God. Papists are idolators, and all union with idolators is forbidden. Every member of the two houses of parliament, previous to his admission, solemnly declares in the presence of God, and in the plain and ordinary sense of the word, without any evasion or equivocation or mental reservation, that popery is idolatry; and therefore that Papists are idolators—whether popery be esteemed idolatry by others is a matter of no consequence in the present question; if members of parliament believe what they have sworn; they vote for a national union with idolators, and thus expose the nation to the guilt of violating the divine law—if they do not believe it to be idolatry, what language can describe the turpitude of their deliberate perjury? The question then is, that those who have sworn in the presence of God that popery is idolatry, either believe it, or disbelieve it; if they believe it, then they vote for insulting the Lord by violating his command; if not they are guilty of perjury.

It is contrary to the most solemn engagements, sworn in the National Covenant, and in the solemn league and covenant; and shall we not expose ourselves to danger, if we be covenant-breakers? It is contrary to the fundamental laws of the country. In the claim of right it is expressly declared that ‘no papist can be king or queen in this realm, or bear any office therein;’ and the time was when it was declared to be ‘treason to impugn, or endeavor by writing, malicious and advised speaking, or other open act or deed, to alter the claim of right.’

It is contrary to reason, that we should have a body of men in parliament determinedly hostile to every thing pro-

testant ; and the more honest they are in their superstition, the more hostile they must be. They *must* according to their principles and open avowal, use all their efforts to overturn every thing which they believe to be damnable heresy.—What but madness can induce any person to give them ability to accomplish these purposes ? It would appear that these advocates for the Papists reason thus, ‘Universal experience has shown, that if you give an enemy power, you may be morally certain he will never use it,’ therefore the infallible mode of rendering popery quite inoffensive, is to confer upon it the power of doing mischief !!! Of late we have heard of inconvenience arising from the want of union in the councils of the nation, relative to the claims of papists ; and how is this to be removed ? Why to engraft on the protestant constitution a principle of perpetual disunion. This must follow these measures ; the papist must exert all his acquired power, to advance what the other members of the senate have sworn to be idolatry ; and to pull down successively every protestant institution ; and the protestant, if possessed of any religion, must oppose him. The language of the advocates for popish emancipation is, Sow the seeds of disunion, and from the sure test of universal experience, you may be quite sure, that you will reap a most abundant crop of union.

By this measure the British Constitution is virtually, and with regard to the integrity of the principle, dissolved. It was truly said by a distinguished statesman (Eldon) that ‘the king holds his crown by a religious tenure ;’ that the basis of our constitution is essentially protestant, and if otherwise, then are the kings of the present dynasty usurpers, and all that support them traitors. Anti-popish in its origin, the British constitution is anti-popish in its means of preservation ; but by this measure it may become entirely popish. Every one but the twelve bishops may be a papist. To call it a protestant constitution after this, is perfectly ridiculous.

By means of this the protestant faith itself, and the great dawning of the reformation, are again brought into peril.—Britain is the pillar on which it rests, Germany being neutralized ; and if England is so by this measure, the balance is gone.

Will it be said that we shall obtain securities ? This is palpable nonsense. What security can we have for our securities ? A majority certainly not weakened by the pro-

jected infusion of popery, may at any time sweep away the absurd fripperies. No securities can be devised ; because nothing can prevent them from being removed. If clamor is to be rewarded, will popery not be doubly clamorous ?— If we now submit, will it not be necessary again to submit to every future association, and demagogue who may choose to form one ? If emancipation be granted, the sun of England is gone down. National guilt can only be punished in this world ; and what national guilt can be more offensive to God than a union with what he hath declared, and what we have declared in his presence, to be superstition and idolatry ?— Is it said that all have a right to worship God, according to their own conscience ? Papists deny this right—they forbid it. They keep no faith with heretics (i. e. protestants) or allegiance to princes ; and to civil liberty they have been uniformly inimical.”

JOHN KNOX'S SERMON BEFORE QUEEN MARY.

(Concluded from page 314.)

Two vices lurk in this our nature : the one is, that we cannot tremble at God's threatenings before the plagues apprehend us, albeit we see cause most just why his fierce wrath should burn as a devouring fire ; the other is, that when calamities before pronounced fall upon us then we begin to sink down in despair, so that we never look for any comfortable end of the same.

To correct this our mortal infirmity, in time of quietness we ought to consider what is the justice of our God, and how odious sin is ; and, above all things, how odious idolatry is in His presence, who has forbidden it, and who has so severely punished it in all ages from the beginning : and in the time of our affliction we ought to consider what have been the wondrous works of our God in the preservation of his church when it hath been in uttermost extremity, For never shall we find the church humbled under the hands of traitors, and cruelly tormented by them, but we shall find God's just vengeance fall upon the cruel persecutors, and his merciful deliverance shewed to the afflicted. And, in taking of this trial, we should not only call to mind the histories of an-

cient times, but also we should diligently mark what notable works God hath wrought, even in this our age, as well upon the one as upon the other. We ought not to think that our God bears less love to his church this day than what he has done from the beginning; for as our God in his own nature is immutable, so his love towards his elect remains always unchangeable. For as in Christ Jesus he hath chosen his church before the beginning of all ages; so by him will he maintain and preserve the same unto the end. Yea, he will quiet the storms, and cause the earth to open her mouth and receive the raging floods of violent waters, cast out by the dragon to drown and carry away the woman, which is the spouse of Jesus Christ, unto whom God for his own name's sake will be the perpetual Protector. Rev. xii.

This saw that notable servant of Jesus Christ, Athanasius, who being exiled from Alexandria by that blasphemous apostate Julian the emperor, said unto his flock, who bitterly wept for his envious banishment, "Weep not, but be of good comfort, for this little cloud will suddenly vanish." He called both the emperor himself and his cruel tyranny a little cloud; and albeit there was small appearance of any deliverance to the church of God, or of any punishment to have apprehended the proud tyrants, when the man of God pronounced these words, yet shortly after God did give witness that those words did not proceed from flesh nor blood, but from God's very Spirit. For not long after, being in warfare, Julian received a deadly wound, whether by his own hand, or by one of his own soldiers, the writers clearly conclude not; but casting his own blood against the heaven, he said, "At last thou hast overcome, thou Galilean;" so in despite he termed the Lord Jesus. And so perished that tyrant in his own iniquity; the storm ceased, and the church of God received new comfort.

Such shall be the end of all cruel persecutors, their reign shall be short, their end miserable, and their name shall be left in execrations to God's people; and yet shall the church of God remain to God's glory, after all storms. But now shortly, let us come to the last point:

"For behold," saith the prophet, "the Lord will come out of his place to visit the iniquity of the inhabitants of the earth upon them; and the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more hide her slain." (Verse 21.) Because that the final end of the troubles of God's chosen shall not be, before

the Lord Jesus shall return to restore all things to their full perfection.

The prophet brings forth the eternal God, as it were, from his own place and habitation, and therewith shows the cause of his coming to be, that he might take account of all such as have wrought wickedly; for that he means, where he saith, "He will visit the iniquity of the inhabitants of the earth upon them." And lest any should think the wrong doers are so many that they cannot be called to an account, he gives unto the earth as it were an office and charge, to bear witness against all those that have wrought wickedly, and chiefly against those that have shed innocent blood from the beginning; and saith, "That the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more hide her slain men."

If tyrants of the earth and such as delight in the shedding of blood, should be persuaded that this sentence is true, they would not so furiously come to their own destruction; for what man can be so enraged, that he would willingly do even before the eyes of God that which might provoke his Majesty to anger, yea, provoke him to become his enemy for ever, if he understood how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God?

The cause then of the blind fury of the world is the ignorance of God, and that men think that God is but an idol; and that there is no knowledge above that beholds their tyranny; nor yet justice that will, nor power that can, repress their impiety. But the Spirit of truth witnesses the contrary, affirming, that as the eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and his ears are ready to receive their sobbing and prayers, so is his visage angry against such as work iniquity; he hateth and holdeth in abomination every deceitful and blood-thirsty man, whereof he has given sufficient document from age to age, in preserving the one, or at least in avenging their cause, and in punishing the other.

Where it is said, "That the Lord will come from his place, and that he will visit the iniquity of the inhabitants of the earth upon them, and that the earth shall disclose her blood;" we have to consider, what most commonly has been and what shall be the condition of the church of God, namely, that it is not only hated, mocked, and despised, but that it is exposed as a prey unto the fury of the wicked; so that the blood of the children of God is spilt like unto water upon the face of the earth.

The understanding whereof, albeit it is unpleasant to the flesh, yet to us it is most profitable, lest that we, seeing the cruel treatment of God's servants, begin to forsake the spouse of Jesus Christ, because she is not so dealt with in this unthankful world as the just and upright dealings of God's children do deserve. But contrariwise, for mercy they receive cruelty, for doing good to many, of all the reprobate they receive evil; and this is decreed in God's eternal council, that the members may follow the trace of the Head; to the end that God in his just judgment should finally condemn the wicked. For how should he punish the inhabitants of the earth if their iniquity deserve it not? How should the earth disclose our blood if it should not be unjustly spilt? We must then commit ourselves into the hands of our God, and lay down our necks; yea, and patiently suffer our blood to be shed, that the righteous Judge may require account, as most assuredly he will, of all the blood that hath been shed, from the blood of Abel the just, till the day that the earth shall disclose the same. I say, every one that sheds or consents to shed the blood of God's children, shall be guilty of the whole; so that all the blood of God's children shall cry vengeance, not only in general, but also in particular, upon every one that has shed the blood of any that unjustly suffered.

And if any think it strange, that such as live this day can be guilty of the blood that was shed in the days of the apostles, let them consider that the Verity himself pronounced, That all the blood that was shed from the days of Abel, unto the days of Zacharias, should come upon the unthankful generation that heard his doctrine and refused it. Matt. xxiii.

The reason is evident; for as there are two heads and captains that rule over the whole world, namely, Jesus Christ, the Prince of justice and peace, and satan, called the prince of the world; so there are but two armies that have continued battle from the beginning, and shall fight unto the end. The quarrel which the army of Jesus Christ sustains, and which the reprobate persecute, is the same, namely, The eternal truth of the eternal God, and the image of Jesus Christ printed in his elect—so that whosoever in any age persecutes any one member of Jesus Christ for his truth's sake, subscribes, as it were with his hand, to the persecution of all that have passed before him.

And this ought the tyrants of this age deeply to consider; for they shall be guilty, not only of the blood shed by them-

selves, but of all, as is said, that has been shed for the cause of Jesus Christ from the beginning of the world.

Let the faithful not be discouraged, although they be appointed as sheep to the slaughter-house; for He, for whose sake they suffer, shall not forget to avenge their cause. I am not ignorant that flesh and blood will think that kind of support too late; for we had rather be preserved still alive, than have our blood avenged after our death. And truly, if our felicity stood in this life, or if temporal death should bring unto us any damage, our desire in that behalf were not to be disallowed or condemned; but seeing that death is common to all, and that this temporal life is nothing but misery, and that death fully joins us with our God, and gives unto us the possession of our inheritance, why should we think it strange to leave this world and go to our Head and sovereign Captain, Jesus Christ?

Lastly, We have to observe this manner of speaking, where the prophet saith, that "the earth shall disclose her blood:" in which words the prophet would accuse the cruelty of those that dare so unmercifully and violently force, from the breasts of the earth, the dearest children of God, and cruelly cut their throats in her bosom, who is by God appointed the common mother of mankind, so that she unwillingly is compelled to open her mouth and receive their blood.

If such tyranny were used against any woman, as violently to pull her infant from her breasts, cut the throat of it in her own bosom, and compel her to receive the blood of her dear child in her own mouth, all nations would hold the act so abominable, that the like had never been done in the course of nature. No less wickedness commit they that shed the blood of God's children upon the face of their common mother, the earth, as I said before. But be of good courage, O little and despised flock of Christ Jesus! for He that seeth your grief, hath power to revenge it; he will not suffer one tear of yours to fall, but it shall be kept and reserved in his bottle, till the fullness thereof be poured down from heaven, upon those that caused you to weep and mourn. This your merciful God, I say, will not suffer your blood for ever to be covered with the earth; nay, the flaming fires that have licked up the blood of any of our brethren; the earth that has been defiled with it, I say, with the blood of God's children; for otherwise, to shed the blood of the cruel blood-shedders, is to purge the land from blood, and as it were to sanctify it:

the earth, I say, shall purge herself of it, and show it before the face of God ; yea, the beasts, fowls, and other creatures whatsoever, shall be compelled to render that which they have received, be it flesh, blood, or bones, that appertained to thy children, O Lord ! which altogether thou shalt glorify, according to thy promise, made to us in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, thy well-beloved Son ; to whom, with thee, and the holy Ghost, be honour, praise, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Let us now humble ourselves in the presence of our God, and from the bottom of our hearts let us desire him to assist us with the power of his Holy Spirit ; that albeit, for our former negligence, God gives us over into the hands of others than such as rule in his fear ; that yet he let us not forget his mercy, and the glorious name that hath been proclaimed amongst us ; but that we may look through the dolorous storm of his present displeasure, and see as well what punishment he has appointed for the cruel tyrants, as what reward he has laid in store for such as continue in his fear to the end. That it would further please him to assist, that albeit we see his church so diminished, that it appears to be brought, as it were, to utter extermination, we may be assured, that in our God there is great power and will, to increase the number of his chosen, until they are enlarged to the uttermost parts of the earth. Give us, O Lord ! hearts to visit thee in time of affliction ; and albeit we see no end of our dolours, yet our faith and hope may conduct us to the assured hope of that joyful resurrection, in which we shall possess the fruit of that for which we now labor. In the mean time, grant unto us, O Lord ! to repose ourselves in the sanctuary of thy promise, that in thee we may find comfort, till this thy great indignation, begun amongst us, may pass over, and thou thyself appear to the comfort of thine afflicted, and to the terror of thine and our enemies.

Let us pray with heart and mouth,

Almighty God, and merciful Father, &c. Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit ; for the terrible roaring of guns,* and the noise of armour, do so pierce my heart, that my soul thirsteth to depart.

*The castle of Edinburgh was shooting against the exiled for Christ Jesus' sake.

The last day of August, 1565, at four of the clock in the after noon, written indigestedly, but yet truly so far as memory would serve, of those things that in public I spake on Sunday, August 19; for which I was discharged* to preach for a time.

Be merciful to thy flock, O Lord! and at thy good pleasure put an end to my misery.

JOHN KNOX.

THE STONE CUT OUT WITHOUT HANDS BECOMING A GREAT MOUNTAIN AND FILLING THE EARTH.

(From the Covenanter.)

Among the revelations of the Divine will concerning the future, and respecting events deeply affecting the church and the world, there are few recorded in the Scriptures of truth more remarkable than that which was vouchsafed to the haughty tyrant of Babylon, and which is recorded in the second chapter of the Prophecy of Daniel. Whether we consider Nebuchadnezzar's dream, in relation to the subject of it, or as a memorable interposition of Divine Providence in opening the path of Daniel and his companions of the captivity to official power and influence, or in reference to future revolutions in the kingdoms of men, and to the final and universal establishment of the church, it was one of the most wonderful communications of the Divine purposes that were made in ancient times. Grand and striking in its imagery, and most comprehensive in its relations, it brought into view events of solemn and absorbing interest, and opened up discoveries calculated to impress even the mind unenlightened by the beams of Divine truth, while they are particularly fitted to comfort and gladden the hearts of the saints.

This prophetic dream is properly an epitome of the history of those great systems of worldly policy which have existed in the earth from the days of Daniel, and which will continue till the glorious Mediator shall have put down all opposing authority, and shall have taken to him his great power to reign. As we are chiefly concerned with one part of the vision,—the Stone cut out without hands,—the discovery to which all the preceding changes look forward, and that which in its full and bright development shall yet astonish

*Forbidden.

the nations, and delight saints and holy angels, we purposely pass over the various forms of earthly grandeur that are exhibited in the different parts of the stately and complex image which appeared to the eye of the awe-stricken monarch. On these the minds of worldly statesmen and philosophers and politicians are chiefly fixed,—for they savour only of the earth, and here their highest hopes are centered. But the Christian's thoughts and affections are towards the kingdom of Christ, as the object of his fervent desires, and the sources of his dearest joys,—and other systems and changes he only regards as of interest, from their bearing on this great and all-important subject.

The image that appeared in vision to the monarch of Babylon, represented the Four great Dynasties, that successfully exercised sovereignty throughout the earth. The Head of "fine gold" exhibited the Chaldean or Babylonish: the breast and two arms of "silver" denoted the Medo-Persian; the belly and thighs of "brass" pointed to the Macedonian or Grecian empire; and the Fourth kingdom, diverse from all the preceding, represented by iron, and by the feet and toes partly iron and partly clay, referred to the Roman empire, subsisting first as one consolidated monarchy, and afterwards as decayed in strength, and partitioned into several distinct kingdoms. Under the period assigned to the continuance of the fourth monarchy, more lengthened than that of any of the preceding dynasties, there is brought into prominent view an object of commanding interest—small, and attracting no notice at first, but rising afterwards in magnitude and importance, till it fills the whole field of vision, and attracts to it universal attention and regard. "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole world."—(v. 34, 35.)

The inspired interpretation affixes a definite meaning to the symbols employed, (v. 44,)—"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these king-

doms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the Stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." The *Stone* cut out of the mountain without hands has been applied to the person of the Redeemer. Various Scripture expressions exhibit him under similar figurative language, as when he is styled a "rock,"—"a foundation,"—"one stone on which there are seven eyes,"—"a chief corner stone." The dying patriarch Jacob thus referred to the promised Messiah in the benediction of Joseph,—"'The archers have sorely grieved him and shot at him, and hated him. But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; from thence is the Shepherd and Stone of Israel.'" Gen. xlix. 23, 24. And the evangelical prophet utters a prediction frequently quoted in the New Testament, in which the Savior is displayed under the same figure. Isaiah xxviii. 16,—"'Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a Stone,—a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste.'" The acute and judicious Lowth tells us that "the Jews unanimously agree, that by the Stone in this passage of Daniel is meant the Messiah." Yet however applicable and suitable the emblem is to express various views of the Redeemer's character, the connexion of the vision, and the express language of the interpretation require, that by the Stone cut out without hands we should understand not Christ personally, but the Kingdom of Christ in the world. It is a system wholly opposed to all the systems of worldly grandeur and oppression that had preceded it. It is "*a kingdom*" which the God of heaven sets up, destined to subvert all opposing authority and power, to become universal, and to endure for ever. With singular propriety has it the name which is often applied to its glorious Head, the Lord Jesus Christ himself. The Church, the mystical body of the Redeemer, is sometimes designated Christ. So here the kingdom of the Mediator is called the Stone, as it brightly displays the glory of its exalted Founder and Sovereign, and like him possesses the properties of strength, stability and perpetuity. The excellent Mede properly remarks that this kingdom is here described under two states,—as the kingdom

of the stone, and the kingdom of the mountain. The Stone at first appears to start into existence imperceptibly : it is for a long time small, and seemingly powerless,—and struggling for continuance, it wages an apparently unequal conflict with numerous strong enemies. It increases slowly but steadily, till it has power sufficient to cope with every opposing system, and to bear it down ; and the downfall of the great image effected, it becomes a great mountain, filling the whole earth, and continues in undecaying power and splendour for ever.

The Stone cut out of the mountain without hands denotes therefore all that is embraced in the kingdom of Christ in the world, often styled in the New Testament, *the kingdom of Heaven*. It comprehends the holy truths of Christianity,—the external means, with the exalted blessings which the Gospel reveals and communicates,—a Divine system of order and government, and the subjects of Christ's mediatory dominion. The *characters* of this kingdom, as exhibited in this remarkable vision, are worthy of distinct consideration. Indelibly impressed upon the Divine system denoted by the little Stone, afterwards enlarged to a great mountain, they display, in a wondrous manner, the wisdom, purity, and goodness of Jehovah ; and a right view of them is eminently fitted to strengthen the faith, encourage the hearts, and animate the hopes of the people of God.

The Kingdom of the Stone is at first small and despised, affording little indication of its future power and greatness. It is a stone apparently of little value,—little in comparison either with the mountain, or with those towering systems which it is destined to supplant and entirely overthrow. Such are the other Scripture emblems by which the kingdom of Christ is exhibited : A “grain of mustard seed,”—a “little leaven,”—a “handful of corn,” upon the tops of the mountains ;—these, and similar, are the representations by which the kingdom of the Redeemer is frequently displayed. Its principles are so little allied to the dictates of human wisdom, its true subjects have so little of worldly policy, or power, or influence to recommend their cause, that on no worldly calculation could its future increase and ascendancy be anticipated. This kingdom comes not with observation. Its principles and motives are deeply seated in the heart ; they operate in scenes far removed from outward view ; and even when they work outwardly, the means are so simple, and

apparently so inadequate to effect any important revolution, and the sphere of their operation is so contracted, that the great and the wise of the world only regard them as worthy of contempt. "What will these feeble Jews do?" was the contemptuous exclamation used by the powerful enemies of Israel regarding the efforts of God's people to re-build Jerusalem and reestablish their ancient policy. The day of the Church's "small things" has always been "despised" by those who would be wise in their generation. Yet does the King of Zion pour contempt upon all those things which are greatly esteemed among men,—upon power, and riches, and human wisdom,—by employing none of them in the setting up of his kingdom in the earth. In due time, He shall lay them all under contribution; for all kindreds of the nations shall do homage to the Redeemer, and the kings of the earth shall bring their riches and glory to Zion; and under the kingdom of the mountain the saints of the Most High God shall fill the high places of power throughout the nations, and the potentates of the earth shall do willing homage to the Redeemer. But in its commencement, and for a lengthened period of its early history, the kingdom of Christ in the world is low,—its subjects few, poor, and uninfluential, and its principles and laws unpopular, and contemned. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." 1 Cor. i. 26, 27, 28. This is a fundamental law, brought into constant operation in the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom. "Not by might or by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." From the despised character of its Founder, the obscurity and outward meanness of his followers, the fishermen of Gallilee—the nature of its principles, opposed as they are to all the darling propensities of the human heart, and waging a war of extermination against every prevailing system of government and religion, the spread and establishment of Christianity never could have been once imagined. Learning, philosophy, political power and worldly greatness, were all arrayed against it, while its professors were accounted fanatics, babblers, enthusiasts. Yet Christianity was powerful in its

apparent weakness ; and but a very few centuries passed from its first promulgation, till the temples of Paganism were forsaken, and the religion of the cross became the established religion of the Roman empire. Even yet the spiritual kingdom of Christ is low in the world. The grand principles embodied in its constitution are little known or appreciated, and are virulently assailed. The faithful witnesses for the royal prerogatives of its Head still prophesy in sackcloth, and the woman continues in her prepared retreat and refuge in the wilderness. This is just what we are led to expect in relation to the kingdom of the Stone in its incipient state. But we may not therefore despise "the day of small things," The Stone cut out by the skill and power of Omnipotence is the object of unceasing divine care. What men lightly esteem, the Lord oftentimes greatly honours. The increase and full ascendancy of this kingdom are guaranteed by all the perfections of the Eternal.

(To be continued.)

MEDIATORIAL DOMINION OVER THE CHURCH.

The following article is extracted from the excellent and able work entitled "The Mediatorial Dominion of Jesus Christ," by the Rev. William Symington, D. D. It is the fourth section under the general Head which we have placed over this article. The importance of the subject, and the clear, impressive and beautiful style of the author, unite in claiming the attention of the reader. By inserting the extract we wish to draw attention to whole work, which we again cordially recommend to all our readers.—ED.

Christ exercises mediatorial rule over the church for the accomplishment of the most important ends.

Of course the grand ultimate end, contemplated in the existence of the church, is *the glory of God*. This is the end, indeed, of every thing that exists. 'The Lord hath made all things for himself.' Such being the case, it follows of course, that this must be the object of so prominent and important a thing as the church. All the perfections of deity are in this way glorified ; and glory is reflected on each of the persons

of the Godhead : on the Father by whom the members of the church are chosen to eternal life, on the Son by whose blood they are redeemed, and on the Holy Spirit by whose influences they are renewed and sanctified. But it is the sovereign grace of God, as a covenant God, that is pre-eminently and peculiarly displayed by the church. Other views of his character are elsewhere exhibited ; it is in this connexion alone that he is magnified and made known as a God of grace. The gracious purpose of God is recognized in the church's existence ; the gracious authority of God, in the voluntary submission of men to its laws and institutions ; and the gracious power, and exuberant goodness, and immaculate purity of God, in the qualifications of its members, in the exercise of its discipline, and its prayers, praises, and other acts of worship. 'This people have I formed for myself ; *they shall show forth my praise.*' 'Having predestinated us, unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ *to himself*, according to the good pleasure of his will, *to the praise of the glory of his grace.*' 'But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people : that ye should *show forth the praises of him* who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*

But this object is secured by the accomplishment of certain proximate ends, prominent among which stand *the exhibition and maintenance of Divine truth*. Divine truth, comprehending the true character of God, the true view of man, the true way of salvation, the true method of sanctification, and the true state of future glory, is a sacred deposit committed to the church. The church is entrusted with this awful charge, for the purpose at once of diffusion and preservation. Without the church, the truth could be neither extensively made known, nor safely kept from extinction. It is contained, to be sure, in the Scriptures, but, without some such institution as the church, the word of God would be sure to be overlooked by the great mass of mankind, and to fall a prey in the end to the wicked devices of those who are enemies to the truth as it is in Jesus. It is the duty and business of the church, both office-bearers and private members, to watch over the existence and interests of gospel truth, to keep it clear from the obscurations of error, to defend it from the assaults of foes who seek its destruction, and to hold it

* Is. xliii. 21 ; Eph. i. 5, 6 ; 1 Pet. ii. 9.

up bright and attractive to the notice and attention of all. To the Jews of old 'were committed the oracles of God,' and from them the precious custody has descended to the church in later times. All the members and ministers may be accounted as, in some sense, 'stewards of the mysteries of God,' and bound according as every man hath received the gift 'to minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.' It is required of stewards that they be found faithful; and fidelity, in the instance before us, consists, not in an exclusive personal appropriation and use of the invaluable gift, but in a cheerful, liberal, and universal diffusion of divine truth amongst others, in the spirit of the authoritative canon, *Freely ye have received, freely give*; and in protecting it, with true fortitude and at all hazards, from the assaults of those who would tread under foot or annihilate it. It is for this reason that the church is described as *the pillar and ground of the truth*,* a noble column on whose sides the lines of sacred truth are so deeply engraven as to defy the obliterating hand of time, and so highly raised that the mutilating hand of man cannot reach them, while from its lofty summit the heaven-lit lamp sheds afar its cheering and life-giving rays. As expressive of the same sentiment, individual churches are compared to golden candlesticks,—suspended on high by the hand of God, to dispense spiritual illumination to a benighted world, and, and to preserve alive that holy fire from which all the nations of the earth are yet to receive light and warmth. What a glorious and benign end this which the Saviour subserves by means of his church. Nor shall the benevolent purpose be defeated, by any or all of the insidious attempts that are made, by men who love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. They may seek to undermine the sacred pillar; but the event will show, that it is built upon a rock and is not to be overthrown. They may try, by heaping around it the rubbish of their errors, to hide from view its glorious inscription; but their attempts shall all prove abortive. They may flatter themselves that, by the mists and noxious exhalations of their false systems, the pure and blessed light of truth shall be hid, but all these obscurations shall be finally scattered as by a whirlwind, and the lamp of gospel illumination shall continue to burn brighter and brighter till every quarter

* 1 Tim. iii. 15.

of the world has been gladdened with its beams. The cause of truth is subject, no doubt, to many vicissitudes; and circumstances may occur to make its timid and anxious friends bewail 'that truth is fallen in the streets.' But while the Saviour has a church in the world, it shall never be wholly trodden down; and that Lord 'whose eyes are upon the truth,' by pouring out 'the spirit of truth,' on the reading and preaching of 'the word of truth' will see to it that to the end of time 'Jerusalem shall be called *a city of truth*.'

By setting up a church in the world, the Mediator has provided for *the public celebration of divine worship*. It is every way proper that some acts of public homage should be paid to the God of the whole earth. The private adoration of individuals would seem not to be all the honour that is due to Him whose claims are so universal and transcendent. He is certainly entitled to acknowledgment in the most public and open manner possible. This is secured by the existence of a visible church, in which his being, perfections, purposes, and works, are publicly discussed; in which his praises are publickly sung, and in which united and public supplications are offered at his throne of grace. Even supposing that, for this end, secret acts of worship might suffice, it may fairly be questioned whether the spirit of such could be kept up, without the influence arising from public institutions. The devotions of the sanctuary, doubtless exert, and are designed to exert no small influence on those of the closet and family. The lamp of personal or domestic piety will send forth but a dim and sickly ray, unless trimmed and replenished by frequent visits to the house of the Lord. When the believer feels those fervent emotions that are represented by his soul thirsting for God, and under the impulse of which he is stirred up to seek the Lord with great earnestness, it is that he may 'see the power and glory of the Lord, as he had seen them before, in the sanctuary.' If the psalmist David poured forth the sweetest and warmest strains of devotion in the wilderness of Judea, and in the forest of Hareth, we must go back, for the secret of his high and holy inspiration, to the days when he trod the courts of the temple,—days which not merely exerted a reflex influence on his solitary exercises, but which, so far from making him contented with these, caused his soul still to long, yea even faint, for the courts of the Lord, and to count a day in God's house better than a thousand. If we

would rise to true elevation of heart in the closet, we must 'lift up our hands in the sanctuary.' So necessary is the church to the proper worship of God.

The church is designed for *the salvation of men*. It is an asylum, to which destitute and needy sinners may betake, to have all their wants supplied; a city of refuge, whither the guilty and justice-pursued may flee for protection; an ark, in which safety is provided from the threatened judgment about to come on a wicked and ungodly world. Here, whatever a lost and fallen sinner of the human family can require, is provided,—pardon, sanctification, peace, happiness, eternal life; and, by betaking to it in time, all these benefits may be infallibly secured. It is the means by which the grand, benevolent purpose of the divine will, respecting our lapsed race, is carried into full effect. It is the nursery of saints, not less than the refuge of sinners. By its doctrine and discipline, by the spiritual instruction and vigilant superintendence it provides, the edification of its members in knowledge, holiness, comfort, and social duty, is promoted. The ordinances to which it gives access, and the interest it secures in the prayers of those who have power with God, cannot fail to render the fellowship of the church a distinguished means of extending knowledge, strengthening faith, confirming love, deepening humility, increasing joy, and cherishing every devout and holy affection. The whole work of grace in the soul is thus progressively advanced, and the individual is ultimately trained for the exalted exercises and enjoyments of the heavenly kingdom. The church in this way, becomes the joyous parent of a numerous spiritual progeny. She is the bride, the Lamb's wife, by whom the freeborn sons and daughters of the Almighty are nursed and reared, till such time as they are made fully meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. She is 'the joyful mother of children,'—'the Jerusalem from above, which is free, and the mother of us all.' It has pleased God, for the purpose of bringing many sons unto glory, to set up a visible church in the world, where these sons should be born again; supplied as new-born babes with the sincere milk of the word that they might grow thereby; fed with the strong meat of the covenant; and thus nurtured and disciplined into the vigour of spiritual manhood,—the fulness of the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus. It is, by being instrumental in the salvation of souls, that the church promotes the glory,

and secures the worship, of Jehovah. Divine worship can be celebrated, and the praise of the glory of divine grace can be shown forth, only by those who are 'saved and called, with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began : ' and this work of salvation is carried on in and by the church. The church, by subjecting the conscience to the authority of Christ, by maintaining wholesome discipline, and by affording opportunity of communion with God and with his saints, tends powerfully to enlighten the understanding, to enliven the affections to restrain the passions, to promote gospel morality, and to advance the divine life in the soul. 'The Lord added to the church such as should be saved. He gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers: for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.'

Such are the ends subserved by the existence of a church in the world. And it is carefully to be observed, that all these ends are brought about by the mediatorial administration of the Saviour. He it is who sends forth his light and his truth to gladden and direct an ignorant and benighted world; who prompts and enables men to celebrate the ordinances of God's worship; and who carries forward the work of salvation in the souls of believers.

SABBATH MORNING.

"Awake psaltery and harp; I myself will awake early." David uttered this divine soliloquy in reference probably to the approaching Sabbath. He intended to *prevent* the morning light with his song of praise; and to usher in the day of rest with the melodies of psaltery and harp. O that every Christian would imitate that devotional man, and charge himself to awake early on the Sabbath morning, and begin the day with God!

There is now an additional reason to summon us at early dawn to the work of prayer and praise. When David sang his morning orisons, the strain was kindled by glorious events which were in prospect; but "now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them who slept." The

seal of the sepulchre, which enclosed the Saviour's body, has been broken ; and his triumphant resurrection has been announced to his disciples, and chanted upon the harps of heaven. Can the Christian think of this and not be moved to a holy activity, as this resurrection morning comes round and invites the soul to its devotions ? Alas ! that we should suffer any part of the Sabbath to pass neglected or unimproved ! But the melancholy fact is, that by the indulgence of the body, the soul is in many instances robbed of that portion of holy time which is all-important as a season of private prayer and meditation. There is reason to apprehend, that a very general delinquency is chargeable upon christian communities in the allowed indulgence of sloth on the morning of the Lord's day. It would seem as if, in this respect, the claims of Mammon were preferred to those of Jehovah.—The husbandman may be seen, at early dawn, driving the plough, or wielding the scythe and sickle, intent on cultivating or gathering in the gifts of God which are necessary for the body ; but how is it when the soul is to be fed, or when the service of God is to be performed ? Does he awake as early on the Sabbath, and address himself with the same alacrity to the momentous business of salvation ? Does even the Christian, on the Sabbath, serve God as early and as eagerly as on other days he serves the world ?

It is not to one class of Christians alone, that we address these interrogatories. Whatever be their employment, or wherever they may reside—whether in country or city—we fear that professors are in danger of robbing God of a part of the Sabbath, and of sleeping away, to their own spiritual injury, the very best portion of the day. With many, it seems to be considered sufficient, if they can rise in time to despatch necessities, and be ready to go up to the great congregation. Very little time is thus allowed for private devotions. Under those circumstances, how can we hope to avail ourselves of the blessings of the day ? Shall we not be in danger of appearing before the King of Zion without the appropriate habiliments ; and of exposing ourselves to that cutting rebuke—"Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment ?"

The morning of the Sabbath is all-important as a season of private devotion. Our first thoughts should be given to God. We should seize the earliest moments of this calm and blessed season and use them for the soul's benefit.

" When first thy eyes unveil, give thy soul leave
 To do the like ; our bodies but forerun
 The spirit's duty ; true hearts spread and heave
 Unto their God, as flames do to the sun.
 Give Him thy first thoughts then, so shalt thou keep
 Him company all day, and in Him sleep.

Yet never sleep the sun up ; prayer should
 Dawn with the day ; there are set awful hours
 'Twixt heaven and us ; the manna was not good
 After sun-rising ; for day sullies flowers :
 Rise to prevent the sun ; sleep doth sins glut,
 And heaven's gate opens when the world's is shut."

Who has not felt the tranquilizing influence of the Sabbath morn? Nature seems to sympathize with the moral associations of the scene. On other days, her voice is almost drowned amid the din and bustle of the world ; but when the wheels of Mammon's car are arrested, and their thunder is not heard, then comes forth her soothing language, which falls on the heart like Æolian music, to subdue its passions, and to awaken its finer sensibilities. The voice of nature is the voice of God. He who speaks of redemption by the blood of Jesus, speaks from the hush and fragrance of the morning, of the vast and varied gifts of his providence. To commune with nature and with God, we must imitate David, and awake early.

The resurrection of Jesus took place before the dawn.— Ere the sun was up, one of his faithful followers repaired to the sepulchre. She went in the morning twilight to look upon the tomb of Jesus. She found it unsealed and empty, and wondered what had become of her Lord. As she wept a voice addressed her, at first in a stranger's accents—lest, under the excitement, a too sudden revelation might overpower her mind—then that voice was changed, and the well remembered tones told her that it was indeed her risen Master. Did Mary find her Redeemer at early dawn ; and shall we presume to expect his presence if we doze away in guilty slumbers, that portion of sacred time ? No ; let us rather fly to the sepulchre, and see amid the shadows of the morning the breaking beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Let us gather the spiritual manna before the sun is up, and feed upon it, ere we refresh ourselves on the food that perisheth.—

Few would complain of dull Sabbaths or wandering thoughts, or tedious services, were they to secure, for the purpose of private devotion, the morning of the Sabbath. A sacred impulse would be obtained, which, like a favoring gale, would waft the soul onward to its rest.

Until you value and improve the Sabbath morning, you need not expect to experience the full advantages of that blessed day. If on other days, you can wake early to serve the world, and on the Lord's day, you take the liberty to indulge the flesh, be assured the Sabbath will not ordinarily prove to you a delight, nor will it close upon you with edification and peace.

WATERBURY.

A CORRECTION.

MR. EDITOR—

In the September number of your valuable periodical there is a misstatement made in relation to Mr. McKinney's having been in connexion with the United Irishmen, which ought to be corrected. Mr. McKinney was two years in America before any difficulties arose between the United Irishmen and the British Government.

As the members of our church generally take a deep interest in any thing that relates to that great man, it may not be uninteresting to your readers to notice the cause of his emigration to this country.

In Ireland, previous to the union, companies were formed in different parts of the country to learn the military art, and petition parliament for a redress of grievances. Mr. McK. was chosen captain of one of these, the company of Kirkhill. Owing to the talent and popularity of their leader, this company fast increased to the diminution of those of the neighboring gentry. The jealousy and envy of one of these being excited, he employed a certain Rumsey to insult Mr. M'K. This he attempted on a public day, when Mr. McK. and some friends were passing an hour in a public house. After some conversation of an unpleasant kind, and threats on the part of R., Mr. McK. who never was disposed to "pocket an insult," sent him down stairs very unceremoniously. Deeply chagrined, R. was determined to have revenge, and there appeared no way so likely to gratify this as to render him obnoxious to the public authorities. He accordingly swore that he had heard Mr. M'K. utter treasonable language in the pulpit. Upon this an indictment was found against him, and efforts made to apprehend him. His friends, fearful of the consequences, advised him to emigrate to America. To their entreaties he answered in the language of the pious and

intrepid Nehemiah, "Should such a man as I flee." His brethren in the ministry and his relations ultimately succeeded in inducing him to leave Ireland; more however from the consideration of the church being in a destitute condition in America, than of his own personal safety. Here he remained, and frequently by letter warned his brethren of the danger of joining with the united Irishmen; and one of these letters, found amongst the papers of one of his brothers, was the means of saving his property from being burned by the British soldiery.

These facts sir, show that Mr. McK. had no connexion with the United Irishmen. Connexion with that body was a stain on the character of many of the members of our church, and some of her ministers, for which they went down sorrowing to their graves; a stain by which Mr. McKinney's character was not tarnished, and which ought not to be imputed to him. The mistake however, was one which a young brother, or perhaps any brother now in the ministry might make, and would not now be corrected, had the attention not been turned to it by the brother of the deceased Mr. McKinney, from whom the above facts were obtained.

H. W.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

The committee of inspection of the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Presbyterian Church met on the first Tuesday of November, and was opened with prayer. Their duties not having been defined by Synod, they felt considerably embarrassed in their proceedings. The students who had arrived were divided into classes, and the branches to be taught by each professor assigned him. The treasurer appointed by General Synod having been removed by death, the appointing of a new treasurer, and attendance on some of the duties of the treasurer, it was supposed, devolved upon the committee. Embarrassed as the committee felt in attending to what it considered its appropriate duties, it felt still more so in attending to those of the treasurer, arising from congregations not having forwarded any of that for which they were respectively pledged. It is to be hoped that difficulties from this cause will not soon arise again. The church can and will support a seminary, and she stands much in need of one, to amply furnish the pious and talented young men who are now coming or may come forward to the sacred ministry.

Messrs. Milligan, Neill, Hutchinson and Stevenson, (who it is understood is travelling for his health,) have been appointed agents to collect monies and books for the Seminary.

A MEMBER OF COMMITTEE.

THE JEWS.

(Extracted from the Episcopal Recorder.)

The recent persecutions of this long afflicted people have awakened a surprising degree of interest in this country and Europe. After having endured for centuries, the excessive persecutions and tortures which have been heaped upon them throughout the earth, they have now, for the first time in their history, awakened the sympathy of mankind. In every nation of Europe they have endured more suffering in each of many succeeding generations, than the sorrows which they have felt in Damascus and Rhodes,—but no nation has thought of their condition as meriting attention. No human power has extended to them the cup of alleviation, or spoken to them in the voice of consolation or relief. The cruelty of the Papal Church has been in every age expended upon them. All the countries of Continental Europe have united to persecute them. Great Britain, while under the Papal dominion, pursued the same criminal course. But it has been to the honor of Protestant Christianity every where, that those bitter persecutions have found no countenance under its benign and purifying influence.

That has been their condition in all lands, except those which have been under the control of the Christianity of the Reformation; the heavenly spring whence all subsequent acknowledgments of civil and religious rights have flowed. But now, in the wonderful order of divine providence, the limited persecutions of Damascus and Rhodes have awakened universal kindness and sympathy; not only in this country, but in the nations of Europe, whose shores have been stained with the blood of Israel in many generations. God is giving them favor at last among the nations where they have been carried away captive. For the first time, in the eighteen centuries of their dispersion and bondage, they are permitted to hear the voice of kindness and pity from those who have persecuted and oppressed them. This is one of the remarkable signs of the present time, and deserves to be well considered by all who would understand the ways of God among men.—A few years since, who in this land was concerned for this people? Who regarded their condition, but as a fact of interest in general history? Who asked or thought what was their condition, or what were their sufferings? But now, the circumstances of this people are a great fact for universal consideration. Their position and prospects constitute a most important element in the arrangement of the affairs of men. The persecutions of Damascus and Rhodes have thus given an interest and importance even to those places which they had not before. The governments of the nations have been moved to interpose for the protection of a people hitherto despised,—and Gentile sympathy and consolation are extending their cheering influence to Jewish suffering and sorrow. This sympathy is a very important and remark-

able fact. It is vain to say that it arises from the extension of humane principles, and the better understanding of civil rights in the present age ; that would not alter the position, that God, in the fulfilment of his word, is awakening a spirit adapted to his commands. We consider this new aspect of the relation of this people, as the special appointment of his will, and as one of the events which are to precede and to mark out the fulfilment of the times of the Gentiles, and the restoration of this "people, scattered and peeled," as "a present to the Lord of Hosts, to the place of the name of the Lord of Hosts, the Mount Zion." We confidently look for the time when "the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."— And we regard this wonderful sympathy among Christian nations for them, as a leading fact, preparing the way for this event. Now, at last, God has raised up the spirit of the Gentiles to favor Israel. They have "obtained mercy through their unbelief," and now these also are to obtain mercy through the mercy of those who have been enriched by their casting away. A glorious day is before them ! "Great shall be the day of Jezreel." Bishop Horsely, of whom Dr. Dwight says, that "his Biblical opinion will rarely be disputed with success," remarks upon Hosea i. 10. "Great indeed, and happy shall be the day when the holy seed of both branches of the natural Israel shall be publicly acknowledged of their God ; united under one head, their King Messiah ; and restored to the possession of the promised land, and to a situation of high pre-eminence among the kingdoms of the earth.— The natural Israel were the first seed of the universal Church, and there is reason to believe that the restoration of the converted Jews will be the occasion and means of a prodigious influx of new converts from the Gentiles in the latter ages. Thus the Jezreel of the natural Israel from the first, have been, and to the last will prove, a seed sown of God for himself in the earth."

We have referred to the remarkable sympathy which has been recently expressed for this people among the various Christian nations. Their condition is a wonder in the earth. For 1800 years they have been oppressed and insulted, a proverb and a by-word, and every where trodden under foot. Jerusalem has been all this time trodden down by the Gentiles. This has been "Zion whom no man careth for ;" the object of indifference, neglect, scorn, insults, in all the earth. But no one who reads the testimonies of God in regard to this people can suppose that he has forgotten them, or that without purpose he has brought upon them all this sorrow. But just as the sympathy and regard for them in the kings and people of Persia, in times of old, was the appointed antecedent to their promised restoration, so undoubtedly may we look upon the present feeling which has been awakened in their behalf as a harbinger of what God designs to do for them. The circumstances and condition of this people are now brought forward in a singular way, and we doubt not will become a prominent element of

European and Eastern politics. The position in which their ancient country now stands, is a circumstance as remarkable as the sympathy which is felt for *them*. The question who shall possess and occupy *it*, seems to be the main question for settlement in European wars or diplomacy. It forms a most important point for observation and thought, in what method God designs to bring about his avowed purpose, of the restoration of the seed of Abraham his friend to their own country.— Every successive arrival from Europe brings us new and most interesting facts in the process of this great question, and the intelligent Christian cannot but feel convinced that great events are suspended upon the arrangements and results which shall be brought out of the present attitude of this wonderful land. The present controversy between the ruler of Egypt and his nominal master in Constantinople, is in regard to the possession of this land. Thus the land of promise, the inheritance of the children of Israel, forms again the object of European dispute. It has been trodden down in conquest, and its capital taken and pillaged by the Babylonians, Grecians, Syrians, Egyptians, Romans, in previous ages of its history; by Saracens, Turks, Mameluks, and the successive conquests and reconquests of the Crusades. It has been the battle ground of nations. We might say, with truth, that more human blood has flowed in the valleys of Palestine, than in any other portion of the world of a similar extent. But for centuries past it has been left in its subjection to the Mahometan, unnoticed by Europe, and beyond the reach of western politics. Who has oppressed it, or who was oppressed in it, has hardly been asked even on the other shores of the Mediterranean which also washes it. Now, by the wonderful Providence of God, it is thrown up again as the ball of contending nations. The great question which Europe must settle, either by war or treaty is, who shall be the future master and occupant of Palestine. The influence of this question fills the news of Europe with immense interest for the observing Christian.

By an entirely different train of circumstances and events, under the same Providence, the Jews themselves are made the object of extensive attention and sympathy; and the country which is certainly to be theirs again, is destitute of a legitimate occupant, and offering, in the claims made to it, the question which is harassing all Europe. We regard this political occurrence, therefore, as another most important circumstance in the present condition and prospects of the Jews, and as one of the facts preparing for their restoration.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

Mr. Robert Carter, 58 Canal street, New-York, to whom we have formerly said the orthodox public are under great obligations for republishing many Theological works, some of which are old and had

become exceedingly scarce, has just issued a beautiful uniform edition of Dr. Chalmers's Works, in seven volumes, 12 mo.

VOLS. I, II.—*On Natural Theology.*—These two volumes contain the Bridgewater Treatise ; besides which, about one half of them consists of original matter.

VOLS. III, IV.—*On the Miraculous and Internal evidences of the Christian Revelation, and the Authority of its Records.*—These two volumes contain the whole of Dr. Chalmers's former work on the Evidences of Christianity ; besides which, as will be seen from the Contents, about three-fourths of them consist of entirely new matter.

VOL. V.—*Sketches of Moral and Mental Philosophy.*—This volume has never before been published.

VOL. VI.—*Discourses on the application of Christianity to the Commercial and Ordinary affairs of Life.*—This volume, besides the former eight Discourses, contains eight additional Discourses of a kindred character, several of them never before published.

VOL. VII.—*Discourses on the Christian Revelation, viewed in connexion with the Modern Astronomy.*—This volume, in addition to the former seven Astronomical Discourses, contains seven additional Discourses of similar character, some of which have never before been published.

Besides the above learned and, in many respects, justly popular Works of Dr. Chalmers, and other works formerly noticed, Mr. Carter has for sale the following, which we recommend to the favorable notice of our readers.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF THE REV. JOSEPH ALLEINE, Author of "An Alarm to the Unconverted," &c.—We think no christian, with grace in exercise, can rise from a proper perusal of this work, especially the greater part of the Letters, without feeling, in increased degree, the necessity, advantage, and actual *exercise* of spiritual mindedness.

OWEN ON THE PERSON AND GLORY OF CHRIST.—The writings of Dr. Owen have made him so well known to most of our readers that farther recommendation of this work than simply saying it is among his best, is deemed unnecessary.

LIFE OF HANNAH MORE, by Thomas Taylor, Esq.—A well written biography of an excellent and highly distinguished woman.

MALCOM ON THE ATONEMENT.—A brief but comprehensive treatise on an all-important subject, viewing chiefly the *extent* and *efficacy* of the atonement.

The above works, with a great variety of others excellent in their character, are embraced in a large collection of books, for sale, at the New York prices, by Carter & Proudfit, 2nd street, Newburgh.

Notice.—The SECOND THURSDAY of February is the day appointed by Synod to be observed as a day of Fasting, humiliation and prayer. For *Causas* see No. 6 of our present volume.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. IV.

FEBRUARY, 1841.

No. XII.

THE STONE CUT OUT WITHOUT HANDS BECOMING A GREAT
MOUNTAIN AND FILLING THE EARTH.

(Continued from page 339.)

The period of the rise of the Kingdom of the Stone is worthy of consideration. In the 44th verse it is declared, "*In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom,*" &c. The period thus defined seems to have special reference to the time of the Fourth Monarchy. It is during the reign of the kings of the Roman empire that the Stone is cut out without hands, and while that dynasty still continues, it increases and rises to power, so as to become a mountain and fill the whole earth. How exactly does this correspond to the history of Christ's kingdom, in its commencement and past progress? The kingdom of the Redeemer, it is true, existed long prior to the era of the four great monarchies; but before the introduction of christianity it was mostly confined to one nation. Before the enlarged dispensation of the New Testament was introduced, three of the four great dynasties had been swept away. When Christ was born in Judea, the Roman empire, under the sway of the magnificent Augustus, had attained the zenith of its glory. While Christianity has been extending its peaceful conquests, and diffusing itself into different nations, the same empire has continued to exist in its divided state. The "feet and the toes" symbolise with the "ten horns," or the "ten kingdoms," of the Apocalypse; and the system of Romish jurisprudence, and the genius of the ancient empire of Rome, are to a great extent re-

tained in the different governments of modern Europe.—There is something strikingly appropriate and illustrative of Divine wisdom in the little Stone coming into existence, and rising to greatness and power at such a period. The experiment was tried on an extensive scale, and for a succession of ages, what systems of mere human policy can do to redress the woes or wrongs of humanity; and when the only result was, that the “world by wisdom knew not God,” and one system rose up more oppressive than another, and the wrongs of the oppressed were greatly multiplied, the anointed Deliverer came, proclaiming genuine liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound. A kingdom was set up, the contrast of those tyrannical and oppressive monarchies under which the inhabitants of the earth long groaned. On its introduction, angels announced its character, when, in ecstatic strains, they sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” (Luke ii. 14.) Instead of war and devastation, it establishes the reign of peace; and instead of violence and oppression, it gives preponderance to the principles of benevolence, purity, and universal equity. Concerning the exalted King, and the character of his administration, it is declared,—“In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth.” “For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.” (Psalm lxxii. 7, 12, 13.) The kingdom of Messiah continued to extend, and to diffuse its benignant blessings during all the period of the existence of the Roman monarchy. Even now its principles are diffused far beyond the limits of the ancient Roman earth; and when the evil nature and pernicious tendency of the Roman system of government shall have been fully displayed, when in its divided state the Fourth Monarchy, after various changes, shall have clearly appeared to have been a merciless scourge to mankind, the kingdom of Christ will entirely subvert it, and on its repairless ruins erect a superstructure, beneficent, enduring and glorious. Interesting and comfortable in no ordinary degree is the thought that no Fifth earthly monarchy shall be reared up, when the tyranny and oppression of the iron empire of Rome have come to an end. Not by political changes, on which so many rely,—not by the schemes of mere worldly statesmen shall the great im-

age be overturned, and all its materials scattered to the winds. It is the Stone cut out without hands that accomplishes the overthrow ; and they who pertain to the kingdom of Christ, and are concerned in promoting its advancement, and they only are owned as approved instruments in rescuing men from oppression, and in securing to them genuine liberty and prosperity. The fourth dynasty exists now only in its divided and decayed state. But a few concussions more, and then the things that can be shaken shall totter to their final fall and be removed, and the kingdom that cannot be shaken shall be brought in to remain for ever.

This kingdom is, moreover, supernatural in its principles, origin, increase, and final ascendancy. In every view, the stony kingdom is extraordinary, being above, and in many respects contrary to natural principles. The stone is cut out without hands. It comes into existence in a manner wonderful and unexpected. Its increase and progress are equally strange and preternatural, just as a stone increasing in magnitude, is a phenomenon unlooked for and contrary to nature. And when it becomes a great mountain, and falls upon the great image, subverting and utterly destroying it, the increase and effects are beyond the range of human calculation, and irresistibly lead to the idea of supernatural agency. The origin of the kingdom of Christ is, in the fullest sense, supernatural and Divine. The plan of its constitution was laid in the infinite wisdom and love of Jehovah.—From all eternity, the Mediator was set King upon the holy hill of Zion, and his goings forth as Ruler of Israel were from of old, from everlasting. In the counsel of peace, the whole design of the kingdom was ordained, and all its arrangements were settled. The appearance of Messiah the Prince in our world, His birth, life, sufferings, and death, were supernatural, forming the inscrutable mystery of godliness, and displaying most illustriously the manifold wisdom of God. The principles of the Redeemer's kingdom are all heavenly in their origin and nature, and their dissemination throughout the world, and eventual triumph, are not to be accounted for by the maxims or conclusions of human wisdom, but by a higher, even a Divine agency. "My kingdom," said the Saviour, "is not of this world." John xviii. 36. It exists in the world ; its subjects are the children of men scattered throughout the earth, and it is capable of receiving support and homage, as it demands subjection from the men and

things of the world. But, at the same time, its character and laws are heavenly,—its objects are spiritual, its sanctions and rewards are from above, and its aims and ends terminate not with this world, but reach forward to heaven and eternity. Whence are we to search for the cause of the increase and triumph of this kingdom? How comes it to continue its existence in a world, arrayed on every side in hostility against its subjects and Sovereign, and the principles of his government? To what shall we ascribe its victory in outward weakness, and its final ascendancy over all opposing power and authority? One principle assumed, and one alone, furnishes a satisfactory answer. The Spirit and might of the Eternal are continually engaged in promoting the interests of this kingdom. Divine energy works out the efficiency of its principles. The Lord of hosts is with his people. All creation and all the movements of Providence too are made to minister to the accomplishment of his gracious designs; and when these shall be fully developed, such will be the display of Divine power in the whole administration, that an undivided and universal ascription of praise will be given to him who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. “Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.” Connected with the kingdom of the Stone, we have nothing to fear from enemies, nor any ground to despair of success for the cause of truth. “The Lord of hosts is with us.” “The God of Jacob is our refuge.”

Lastly. *This kingdom, though greatly opposed, is destined to become finally victorious and triumphant.* At every stage of its progress, the Stony kingdom has to encounter manifold opposition. The powers of darkness,—the men of the world,—the corrupt systems that prevail in the earth, all are in waged hostility against the kingdom of Christ. The enmity of the serpent’s seed against Christ and his people and cause, is inveterate and unmitigable. “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and his Anointed, saying—Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.” This opposition is fruitless and unavailing. The Mediator *must* reign until all his enemies shall become his footstool. The Lord that sits in heaven shall laugh at their designs, and hold them in derision. The kingdom of Christ holds its onward and progressive course, despite of all opposition; and it works its way to universal sovereignty, notwithstanding all the plots,

contrivances, and attempts of enemies. The gates of hell never can prevail. The little Stone is *destructive*. Neither in principle nor operation is the kingdom of Christ tolerant of the evil maxims, or unrighteous acts which characterize the kingdoms of the earth. Its exalted Sovereign, who wears on his vesture and thigh, the august title,—“**KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS,**” will brook no rival upon the throne. He will hold the reins of government, until He has put down all hostile authority and power. In the day of his wrath, He will strike through kings that withstand him. He will remove the diadem, and take off the crown, and overturn, until he comes to exercise his indefeasible right to be the acknowledged Governor among the nations. Of the kingdom of the Mediator, it is emphatically said,—“It shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms,” v. 44. This destructive process goes forward from the origin of the little Stone till it becomes a vast mountain, filling the whole earth. The principles of Christ’s kingdom are essentially subversive of every system of error and wickedness, and the direct tendency of its spirit, laws, and whole administration, is to banish sin and immorality from the earth. The increase of the little Stone affords the sure presage that, in due time, the work of subversion shall be complete. The Bible is marching forward to universal empire, destined, as the rod of the Redeemer’s power, to crumble to atoms systems of error, idolatry, and oppression. The angel having the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth, is in his flight throughout the expanse of heaven, and the proclamation of peace and salvation is the trumpet-note of the doom of every system of darkness. The testimony of Jesus,—the illuminated standard of the kingdom,—the Ensign lifted up to the nations, is moving onward to assured victory, and however feeble and few for a time may be the host which it guides, it shall one day wave in triumph over every prostrate foe.—There is no mention, whatever, of those kingdoms on which the Stone falls being reformed. The words declare not their amelioration, but their utter and irretrievable destruction.—The Stone bruises and breaks them in pieces, and they are scattered, never to be collected again, as the dust of the summer threshing-floor is dispersed by the winds of heaven. Utterly vain is the hope that the systems emblematically represented by the different parts of Nebuchadnezzar’s image, and they embrace the great elements of almost every sys-

tem of worldly policy that has existed on the earth, shall ever be reformed. They are doomed to irreparable ruin, and the progress of Christ's truth is a sure indication of their approaching destruction. The Stone does not fall on the feet and the toes of the image alone. The gold, silver, brass,—the symbolical representations of the other systems that had previously obtained, are likewise overthrown, and are driven away, so that not a single vestige of their existence remains.

It is worthy of remark, that the last form of the Fourth monarchy—the Papacy, has the same name as the first of the four great dynasties. It is called Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots; and the reason of the designation is obvious. The same system of idolatry, and superstition, and of inveterate cruelty towards God's Israel, runs through all these successive monarchies. The spirit is the same, though the form may undergo alteration. Especially does the Antichristian system, which has been, not inappropriately, called "*baptized heathenism*," concentrate in itself the pride, cruelty, idolatry, and error, which have existed under the worst forms of oppression that have enthralled mankind. Mystical Babylon, with all its supporters, is doomed to fall to rise no more. Her plagues shall be wonderful; and at the joyfull era of recompense for the wrongs of Zion, the harlot city shall be cast as a great mill-stone into the sea, and a mighty angel shall proclaim, through the expanse of heaven,—"*Babylon the Great is fallen; the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.*"

Inconceivably happy is the era that succeeds to the Church and to the world. The Stone has become a great mountain, whose dimensions are commensurate with the limits of the globe. The Kingdom of the Stone has attained its meridian power and splendour, and is now the Kingdom of the mountain. Its subjects tenant every land: its laws are universally recognized; and its holy and blessed principles, freed completely and for ever from reproach and contempt, shine forth with the effulgence of the sun in his noon-day brightness.—"*The Lord shall be King over all the earth; his name shall be one, and his praise one.*" "*He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.*" "*From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, his name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto his name, and a pure offering.*" By a threefold declaration are we assured

in this passage of the *perpetuity* of this Kingdom. It "shall never be destroyed," "the Kingdom shall not be left to other people," and it "shall stand for ever." Indestructible in its principles and character, it is susceptible of no decay, and the attempts of all enemies are powerless against it. It is secured to the people of the saints without the possibility of alienation, and the right of succession is incapable of transfer or alteration. It is inscribed with immortality, and will only become heightened in its glory, when its form shall be changed, and the mediatorial dominion shall merge into the eternal Kingdom of the Trinity, God being all in all.

Let Christians, and especially the witnesses for the Lamb, hence learn their true interests and great duties. Vital connexion with the kingdom of the Stone is the ground of all privilege and honour. The kingdom of God, in its power and substantial blessings, is within; it is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let us make sure of this inheritance, and imbibe and cultivate these internal principles. All our well-springs should be in Zion—all our hopes, desires, and efforts, should be directed towards the kingdom of the Redeemer,—all should aim to promote its enlargement and ultimate triumph. Knowing that all the systems of worldly policy depicted in the great image, are in opposition to the progress of the little Stone, and are destined never to be ameliorated, but to perish, we should learn to stand aloof from them all, and never to say a confederacy to any part of their unhallowed policy. The ground of assured and joyful confidence to the saints of God is, that we are now living in the days of the last of these kings, which is destined by a sure decree speedily to be subverted. No other system of earthly tyranny and oppression shall succeed, but the kingdom of our Lord and Redeemer shall fill the whole earth, and shall last for ever. May the Lord graciously hasten it in his time! "Thy kingdom come."—"Even so, come, Lord Jesus,—come quickly!"

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS.

We readily give place to the following communication, hoping that it may call attention to the two important parts of church order on which it treats. Both the law and the practice of the church are correctly stated in the matter of appeals, except that extracts are

given before, not after the appellant furnishes his reasons. Often the extracts are necessary to the right preparation of reasons to be given in. In the case of complaints, the views of the writer differ in some points from the practice of the church. A complainant, according to ecclesiastical usage, is not obliged to furnish the reasons of his complaint to the judicatory complained of. It is held sufficient if he notify them of his intention to complain. Neither does a complaint necessarily stay proceedings in such manner as is intimated by the writer when he speaks of a session resolving upon the dispensation of the Lord's Supper, &c. The church has not viewed a complaint, regularly and dutifully made, as "an informal libel." Informal libels she forbids to be received.

The distinction between a Petition and Complaint should always be observed, and on this point the remarks are worthy of all due consideration.—ED.

The subordination of judicatories is a distinguishing feature of Presbyterianism. According to this system, the transactions of the inferior ecclesiastical courts, may be brought under revision by the superior. This arrangement is scriptural. It existed in the Jewish commonwealth ; we find it in the church during the apostolic period ; it has been generally adopted in the purest churches ; and has, in its principle, been embodied in the civil constitutions of all enlightened nations. An arrangement of this kind, either in nations or in churches, has in view as one of its main objects the prevention of injustice, whether designed or unintentional. This it does by securing to an accused party an impartial trial ; by furnishing necessarily, time and opportunity for careful investigation, that before an ultimate decision, the case may be fully understood ; and by opening a way for the correction of undesigned errors in judgment ; for "in a multitude of counsellors there is safety." Besides these objects, there is one that is peculiar to the church ; that is, the preservation of the unity and purity of the whole body thro' the instrumentality of a constant and watchful supervision exercised by the higher courts over the lower.

Such a power of supervision, it is readily perceived, requires to be employed with great caution and integrity. In itself, this supervision is of a somewhat unpleasant nature ; and circumstances may easily arise that will render it much more so. There is also danger, which needs to be guarded

against, of the higher judicatories becoming, from the eminence of their position, and from the fact that they are the courts of last resort, the only real authorities in the body, thus the inferior courts will be entirely overlooked, and their decisions disregarded. Hence arises the necessity of the utmost caution, lest, on the one hand, individuals be wronged, and, on the other, lest the lower courts be broken down by the weight of the higher.

There are three ways in which the control we have spoken of, can be exercised. Through the intervention of an "Appeal," by "Complaint," or by a "Review" of the higher courts, at stated periods, of the whole proceedings of the inferior. We propose, at present, to make some observations respecting the "Appeal," and "Complaint."

These names are technical; and have long been in use.—The laws relating to the first of them are drawn with so much distinctness, that little of obscurity rests upon the subject of appeal. Any one who has submitted to a trial in the inferior court, may protest against its decision, provided he is aggrieved by it, and appeal to the next superior court.—All that is necessary to be done in such a case is, that the appellant say, in a respectful manner, to the court, "I protest against the decision in my case, and do appeal to Presbytery, Synod, or Assembly, as the case may be, and crave extracts." This is to be done immediately, or, at least, before the rising of the court. He is then to furnish his reasons of protest and appeal within a reasonable time. The law has commonly been "ten days." The court then furnishes copies of the whole proceedings in the case, and thus, the whole matter is brought before the court appealed to. When there, no new testimony can be received. The facts in the record, are the only facts on which the judicatory can decide the appeal. In case one reason of appeal should be the refusal or neglect of the inferior court to take all the testimony offered by the appellant, this fact must have been stated at the time, and the refusal or neglect entered upon the minutes. If no exception was taken to the manner of proceeding in the lower court in respect to testimony, not a word of new evidence can be heard. Any other principle would, not only tend to crowd business upon the superior courts, but would also be fraught with injustice to the inferior. An accused (or an accuser) might wilfully withhold testimony from the court in which the case was first issued, and, in

this way, pester the higher, and bring the odium of an erroneous decision wrongfully upon the inferior judicatory.— And even in case new and important evidence, unknown before, has been discovered in the mean time, no superior court would act wisely or legally in taking this testimony and deciding the case. Under such circumstances, having ascertained the character of this new evidence and judged it important, the whole case would be referred back to the lower judicatory ; or, in other words, a new trial would be ordered. This is necessary for the maintenance of the authority and influence of inferior courts.

The Complaint is more difficult to explain, and place upon right principles. Nothing corresponding to it is found in civil society. It has its origin altogether in the last object which was mentioned above, as contemplated in the subordination of ecclesiastical courts: viz. the preservation of unity and purity in the church. In the old forms of procedure, the “complaint” is not found at all. The only method by which a case could be carried up was by appeal. And so long as the proceedings of inferior courts were often and carefully revised by the higher, it was possible to dispense with “complaints.” We cannot but think, however, that there are some advantages attending this form of procedure *when properly observed*. At present, when it is universally admitted that a *judicial* decision cannot be reversed by the higher court upon review merely, something of this nature seems to be absolutely requisite. This is well stated by Dr. Hill, in his “View of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland.” Ed. 1835, page 60.

“It is possible that the judgment of an inferior court may be favorable to the views of the only party who had sisted himself at their bar ; that it may do no wrong to any individual ; or that the party who is aggrieved may decline the trouble of conducting an appeal ; and yet the judgment may appear to some members of the court contrary to the laws of the church, hurtful to the interests of religion, and such as involves in blame or in danger those by whom it is pronounced. In this case, the minority have a right to record in the minutes of the court their dissent, by which they save themselves from any share of the blame or danger ; and they have also a right to complain to the superior court.”

The “Complaint,” as defined by Dr. Hill, is really an appeal ; differing from an appeal in nothing material, but the circumstance, that a *party only* can appeal, while the minor-

ity of a court, or others, complain. The complaint, equally with an appeal, "sists all the parties at the bar of a superior court." It stays proceedings in the mean time. And upon a complaint, the decision of the inferior court may be reversed. It follows, of course, that the same forms are to be observed in complaints as in appeals. There must be due notice given at the time the act complained of is passed, and the reasons of complaint must be presented to the judicatory complained upon; and no facts can come before the higher court but what are in the record. It is unnecessary to argue any of these. Certainly, if all these rules are to be observed in the case of appeals; they are in the same degree, and for the same reasons, necessary in complaints; for, as has been shown, the effect of a complaint is the same with that of an appeal. The equity of proceedings in both is, therefore, to be tried by the very same principles.

We might have made the remark respecting the similarity between appeals and complaints, as furnishing a reason why both should be conducted in the same way, a good deal stronger. *For, in fact, a complaint partakes somewhat of the nature of a libel.* In the case of an appeal, the appellant is acting on the defensive. He supposes his rights to be affected by the decision, and he appeals for redress. In the other case, an individual, or individuals, not a party, take a step which sists the judicatory complained of, before the bar of the higher court. This difference is seen in the names themselves. "Appeal," from "*appello*," *I call*, signifies a cry for help. "Complaint" carries its nature upon its face. *It is an informal libel.* As it appears to us, this admits of no dispute.

There may be no charge that involves any more than a mistake in judgment, but that is truly a charge, and a complaint *may* result in the censuring of the inferior court. Now if this view is correct, it confirms strongly, the statement, we have made, that the forms observed in prosecuting appeals, should be strictly observed in prosecuting complaints.

These considerations enable us to come to a decision intelligently in reference to another branch of this subject. Are all the doings of inferior judicatories open to be complained of? This question may, perhaps, be best answered by asking another. Suppose a session resolves, soon after the Presbytery has held its meeting, that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be administered in the course of the ensuing month: Can that act be complained of? Certainly not. To

extend the privilege thus far, would put it in the power of a few troublesome persons to prevent the administration of the sacrament altogether. The same holds respecting the appointment of days for congregational fasting; the making arrangements, when called for, in regard to social meetings and in any other things, which must be left to the judgment of the session, under that general supervision, which the Presbytery exercises by review and control. In the same way, there are many proceedings of Presbyteries that cannot be brought under the cognizance of the higher judicatories except by general review.

The last topic which we notice at this time, is the difference between a complaint and a petition. Suppose an individual believes the session of a particular congregation has committed an error. He writes out and sends or carries up to the Presbytery a document, called a petition, containing a statement of matters in which, as he conceives, the session has done wrong. It is presented and read in the Presbytery. There are no witnesses attached, it is signed only. It is not a libel, nor does the complainant consider himself a prosecutor. What follows? The members of the court complained of are silent: for they cannot be called upon at this stage of the business. Is there any thing that can be done except to return the paper to the complainant, or to proceed and frame a libel upon the information in the so-called petition; provided the names of witnesses can be obtained? One of the two must be done. No ultimate decision, affecting the Court complained of, can be taken upon such a paper alone, without investigation; for assuredly, it is not testimony, the statement must be substantiated by proof before the Presbytery would think of coming to any decision. If it is determined to proceed by way of libel, the session can ask a reasonable time to prepare for trial. It is plain that here is something wrong. The wrong consists in this; the paper, instead of being a petition, is a *Complaint*. For every paper which goes up with charges of mal-administration against an inferior judicatory is virtually a libel and not a petition at all. A petition may pray for any thing that the petitioner conceives the Court is competent to grant him. It is for the Court to decide whether the petition can, and ought to be granted. A complaint, let it be called by what name it may, is any document which asks, not to grant the complainant any thing, but to proceed against another, whether it be an individual or a court. This distinction ought to be remembered; otherwise

there may be heaped on the tables of the church judicatories papers under the name of petitions filled with evil reports of members and officers in the church, and thus the courts of the church may be the gates through which the most slanderous and injurious reports may receive circulation and currency. As soon as it is ascertained on reading a paper which appears under the name of petition that it contains statements affecting the conduct and character of church members or officers, the reading should be stopped. It should then be ascertained whether the petitioner has prepared the proof &c. as in a case of libel; or whether he should not be directed to bring his charges in due form before the proper Court.

Finally let offenders be proceeded against by libel, and the higher judicatories oversee the lower, and then the Presbyterian system will accomplish, where these are honestly and properly done, the great objects of church government.

REPORT OF THE PRESBYTERY OF ILLINOIS ON ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETIES.

To observe carefully the signs of the times, is a duty pleasant and profitable. This duty has many advantages, calculated to recommend it to every christian disciple. It is in this way that we often learn what Israel ought to do. For neglecting it, the Redeemer sharply reproved the Pharisees, "O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" But although this duty is common to all the people of God; yet it is especially incumbent on the rulers of Israel. From the watchman on the walls of Zion, whose commanding position affords many facilities for its performance, the citizens expect to hear of the movements and advances of the enemy and learn their duty. And upon the developement of every new aspect in the times, the citizens have a right to ask, "Watchman, what of the night?" Such is the character of the present times, and such is the inquiry coming up from various parts of our Zion. To this question we reply,

That in contemplating the condition of the church and the world around us, there is much to pain and alarm those who "love the truth and the peace." In the church there is much to mourn over. A cold and carnal spirit prevails a-

mong professors. The things that remain are ready to die. The spirit and influence of the world are sapping the foundations of piety and godliness. While there is much concern and activity about the form of godliness, there is little evidence of its life and power. Instead of seeking the true riches, many are saying, O who will show us *any* good.— Few receive the truth in the love of it. The love of truth by which brethren are bound together, is fast diminishing.— The most trivial offence is considered by many a sufficient cause for disregarding the most solemn vows and obligations. The spirit of contention and insubordination prevailing to so alarming an extent in the world, has entered the church. Little respect is manifested to the order and authority of God's house. Accustomed to witness strife and rebellion in society around, until they are rendered familiar, the same feeling is brought into the church of God. So little are the most solemn vows esteemed and regarded, that some have left the church without even assigning a reason. Those with whom we not long since took sweet counsel in going to the house of God in company, appear to be our most bitter enemies, and to enjoy pleasure in the service of the accuser of the brethren. When the great adversary fails in other ways, to draw the disciples from the faith, he transforms himself into an angel of light, and his servants into ministers of righteousness. And so great is his power, and so corrupting is the influence of this very sinful and ungodly age, upon the members of the church, that some are prepared to join every one that raises the flag of rebellion against the authority of the Lord's house, and cries "Lo, here is Christ." All this shows the necessity of exhorting our people to "save themselves from this untoward generation."

Nor can we give a more favorable report from contemplating the nations of the earth. Here the prospect appears still more dark and portentous. The moral world is in a state of commotion. Strife, discord, and insubordination everywhere prevail. The bonds by which mankind have been bound together for ages, are fast dissevering. Society appears on the eve of revolution. God is shaking the heavens and the earth. It is only that kingdom which cannot be shaken that will remain. The constitutions of the nations are essentially corrupt. In their organization are contained the seeds of their dissolution. The opposite and discordant materials of which they are composed, being brought into collision, cause

the thrones of iniquity to tremble, and threaten universal revolution, Infidelity—blighting in its influence and disorganizing in its tendency, with all its consequent evils, which have so long afflicted mankind, is every where prevalent and increasing. The enemy is coming in like a flood. How appropriate is the language of the prophet. "Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off, for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil, maketh himself a prey." Isa. lix. 14, 15.

Amid these scenes of iniquity and prevailing disorder, it is often difficult for the witnesses of Jesus to understand the most eligible and efficient plan of exemplifying and applying the principles of their testimony. That individual indiscretion should be occasionally manifested, the frailty of human nature, and the history of the church in her best days, teach us to expect. To keep their garments unspotted from the world, and to apply their principles to the changing aspect of the times, so that their light might shine to the best advantage before men, has always been a difficult task to the followers of the Lamb. This is peculiarly so at the present time, and requires a large portion of that wisdom which is profitable to direct.

The governments of the earth know not God. Their practical language is, Who is the Lord that we should obey him. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast their cords from us." These are thrones of iniquity with which God can have no fellowship. Also, they all essentially fail in answering the primary characteristic and immediate end of civil rule—God's ordinance for good to men. In their constitutions generally, the rights of many of their subjects are but partially provided for: or, as in that of the United States, the rights of a large portion are entirely disregarded. Hence we behold the tears of the oppressed in the land: for on the side of the oppressor there is power, but they have no comforter. The cries of millions have been long entering into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. When the authority of God is thus publicly rejected, and the rights of man disregarded, it is not always easy for the faithful witness to choose the most eligible position for asserting the one and pleading for the other.

To remedy these and other abounding evils, and to promote the common good, some of the people have associated themselves together, in what are termed "Voluntary Societies." These associations are the ebullitions of the deranged moral elements of society, seeking their proper affinities—and discover the deep and universal agitation of the mass from which they arise. Their supposed necessity implies a radical deficiency in existing institutions to promote the general weal. Their virtual language is, that "all the foundations of the earth have gone out of their course." They plainly indicate in the community a general and deep felt impression of wrong, and that the various governments of the day are inadequate to accomplish the great end for which the Creator instituted moral order among men. These are, in one respect, an encouraging sign in the aspect of the times, to the Witnesses who prophesy in sackcloth during the great Anti-Christian reign. For whatever folly and extravagance may accompany these movements, they certainly foretell the removal of those things that can be shaken.

Among these associations, the American Anti-Slavery Society holds a prominent place. This society assumed, as a fundamental principle, that the Law of God is the only rule according to which men ought to be governed in all the relations of life, and that as slaveholding is a violation of this law, it is therefore *sin*, and should be immediately abandoned. This principle has always been a prominent and distinctive tenet of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. This principle we still maintain; and from advocating it, neither the menaces of slaveholders, nor the reproaches of calumnious and back-sliding brethren—nor both united—shall cause us to recede. Standing on this high moral ground, we rejoice to see any coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. And so long as we breathe in the land of the oppressed, so long shall we labor in the cause of the slave, and direct our prayer to the sanctuary on high, for such as are appointed unto death by men.

As this professed principle of the American Anti-Slavery Society is the same with that of the Ref'd Presbyterian Church, some of our people, that they might more efficiently carry out their own principle, united themselves with that society, whose professed object was to apply the principle to the existing state of things. That a voluntary society—embracing no immoral principle in its organization—in a disturbed state

of the community is, in all cases, necessarily sinful, we are not prepared to affirm. Because, in so doing, we would condemn "the noble contendings of the martyrs of Jesus against Paganism, Popery and Prelacy, and immoral constitutions," of which we have in the most solemn manner expressed our "approbation." It was by acting in this way that the Covenanters of Scotland and the Puritans of England originated the second glorious Reformation. Charles First contended, that every association of the people—distinct from church and state—seeking reform—was necessarily sinful. A favorite maxim with all tyrants. On this principle, let church and state become corrupt, and there is little prospect of reformation. Then the priests and the nobles may safely exact what they please from the people. Our reforming ancestors did not think so. Alexander Henderson—than whose name few are more dear to every true hearted Covenanter—and a principal agent in the second Reformation, was appointed by the Parliament to confer with Charles, in order to reconcile him to its measures. The King refused to sanction the Parliament's measures of reform, because they had *originated with the people*. How did Mr. Henderson treat the King's objection? He contended in opposition to Charles, that when a civil government fails or ceases to accomplish its end, the rights delegated by the people, revert again to their original proprietors, and that they should exercise these rights for the public good. He maintained, that in a disturbed state of society—the people have a right to associate together, and that the most entire and permanent reformations commence with the people.—(See Neal's History of the Puritans.)

But although we cannot admit with Charles I. the *per se* sinfulness of every voluntary association; yet, inasmuch, as the American Anti-Slavery Society appears in a great measure to have lost sight of the above principle, and to have become immersed in the politics of the day; as many of its auxiliaries require their members to vote at the polls, and thus virtually to approve of and to swear to support an immoral constitution—containing the very evil which they propose to remove; as its leading members are employed in extenuating and covering the evils of the United States' constitution, and he that covereth his sins shall not prosper; as the society has become a medium, through which Covenanters cannot consistently and beneficially direct their influence for the good

of the oppressed ; we therefore recommend to all our people who may have united with the society, to withdraw from it.

Amid these scenes of confusion and abounding wickedness it is nevertheless consolatory to know, that the time of the end draws near. And though our Zion has been shaken by the factious and revolutionary spirit of the age, until some of its members have been sifted out of it ; yet the promise of God and the history of the past assure us, that no weapon formed against Zion shall prosper, and every tongue that rises in judgment against her shall be condemned. For those times when God is about to arise and shake terribly the earth, he has provided chambers of safety for his people. And addressing them he says, Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee, and hide thyself for a little moment until the indignation be overpast. For a little longer Israel shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. For the world and for the church, great trials and commotions are reserved. But though the waters roar, and the mountains shake with the swelling thereof ; yet under the grand moral government of the Mediator, who sits upon a throne above the wheels directing their high and dreadful bearing, the whole complicated and stupendous system shall be controlled for the good of the church, redeemed by his blood. Nor are there wanting encouraging signs of better days. Here amidst clouds of darkness we behold the dawning of a glorious morn. The beams of the sun of righteousness begin to gleam over the mountains of future years. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The severing of unholy alliances and the shakings of the nations are the beginnings of those mighty revolutions which shall precede the coming of the desire of all nations, and usher in the latter day glory. Then the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ ; and the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and shall possess it forever and ever.

JAMES WALLACE, Presbytery's Clerk.

Elkhorn, (Ill.) Nov. 24, 1840.

HINDRANCES TO GROWTH IN GRACE.

If we are on the watch we often may find good things when they are least expected. It is seldom that I consult an almanac for any purpose ; but wishing, the other day, to see when the moon would change, I opened the calendar at the current month, and the first thing which struck my eye was the heading of a paragraph in the very words which I had selected as the subject of this essay—"Hindrances to Growth in Grace." Of course I perused the short paragraph, and I was so well pleased with what I read that I resolved to take it for my text—and here it is, word for word :

"The influence of worldly relatives and companions—embarking too deeply in business—approximations to fraud for the sake of gain—devoting too much time for amusements—immoderate attachment to a worldly object—attendance on an unbelieving or unfaithful ministry—languid and formal observance of religious duties—shunning the society and religious converse of Christian friends—relapse into known sin—oversight and of course nonimprovement of graces already attained."

Now, all this is very good and very true ; the only objection is, that several of the particulars mentioned should rather be considered as the *effects* of a real declension in religion than the mere hindrances to growth ; although it is true, that nothing so effectually hinders our progress as an actual state of backsliding. It seems desirable to ascertain, as precisely as we can, the reasons why Christians commonly are of so diminutive a stature, and of such feeble strength in their religion. When persons are truly converted they are sincerely desirous to make rapid progress in piety ; and there are not wanting exceeding great and gracious promises of aid to encourage them to go forward with alacrity. Why then is so little advancement made ? Are there not some practical mistakes very commonly entertained, which are the cause of this slowness of growth ? I think there are, and will endeavor to specify some of them. At first, there is a defect in our belief of the freeness of divine grace. To exercise unshaken confidence in the doctrine of gratuitous pardon is one of the most difficult things in the world. And to preach this doctrine fully without verging towards Antinomianism is no easy task, and is therefore seldom done. But

Christians cannot but be lean and feeble when deprived of the proper nutriment. It is by faith, that the spiritual life is made to grow ; and the doctrine of free grace, without any mixture of human merit, is the true object of faith. Christians are too much trained to depend on themselves, and not to derive their life entirely from Christ. There is a spurious, legal religion which may flourish without the practical belief in the absolute freeness of divine grace, but it possesses none of the characteristics of the Christian's life. It is found to exist in the rankest growth in systems of religion which are utterly false. But even when the true doctrine is acknowledged, in theory, often it is not practically felt and acted on. The new convert lives upon his frames, rather than on Christ ; and the older Christian, still is found struggling in his own strength ; and failing in his expectations of success, he becomes discouraged first, and then he sinks into a gloomy despondency, or becomes, in a measure, careless, and then the spirit of the world comes in with resistless force. Here, I am persuaded, is the root of the evil : and until religious teachers inculcate clearly, fully, and practically, the grace of God as manifested in the Gospel, we shall have no vigorous growth of piety among professing Christians. We must be, as it were, identified with Christ—crucified with him, and living by him and in him by faith, or rather have Christ living in us. The covenant of grace must be more clearly and repeatedly expounded in all its rich plenitude of mercy, and in all its absolute freeness.

Another thing which prevents growth in grace is, that Christians do not make their obedience to Christ comprehend every other pursuit. Their religion is too much a separate thing, and they pursue their worldly business in another spirit. They try to unite the service of God and Mammon. Their minds are divided and often distracted with earthly cares and desires, which interfere with the service of God ; whereas they should have but one object of pursuit, and all that they do and seek should be in subordination to this.—Every thing should be done for God and to God ; whether they eat or drink, they should do all to his glory. As the ploughing and sowing of the wicked is sin, because done without regard to God and his glory ; so the secular employments and pursuits of the pious should all be consecrated and become a part of their religion. Thus they would serve God in the field and in the shop, in buying and selling,

and getting gain—all would be for God. Thus their earthly labors would prove no hindrance to their progress in piety ; and possessing an undivided mind, having a single object in pursuit, they could not but grow in grace, daily. He whose eye is single shall have his whole body full of light.

Again, another powerful cause of hindrance to the growth of the life of God in the soul is, that we make general resolutions of improvement, but neglect to extend our efforts to particulars ; and we promise ourselves that in the indefinite future, we will do much in the way of reformation, but are found doing nothing each day in cultivating piety. We begin and end each day without aiming or expecting to make any particular advance on *that* day. Thus our best resolutions evaporate without effect. We merely run the round of prescribed duty, satisfied if we do nothing amiss, and neglect no external service which we feel to be obligatory. We resemble the man who purposes to go to a certain place, and often resolves with earnestness that he will some day perform the journey, but never takes a step towards the place. Is it at all strange that that person, who on no day makes it his distinct object to advance in the divine life, at the end of years and months is found stationary ? The natural body will grow without our thinking about it, even when we are asleep, but not the life of piety, which only increases by and through the exercises of the mind, aiming at higher measures of grace. And as every day we should do something in this good work ; so we should direct our attention to the growth of particular graces ; especially of those in which we know ourselves to be defective. Are we weak in faith, let us give attention to the proper means of strengthening our faith ; and above all, apply to the Lord to increase our faith. Is our love to God cold and hardly perceptible, and greatly interrupted by long intervals in which God and Christ is not at all in our thoughts, let us have this for a daily lamentation at the throne of grace—let us resolve to meditate more on the excellency of the divine attributes ; and especially on the love of God to us—let us be much in reading the account of Christ's sufferings and death, and be importunate in prayer, until we receive more copious effusions of the Holy Spirit ; for the fruit of the Spirit is love ;—for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. And so we should directly aim at cultivating and increasing every grace ; for the divine

life, or "new man," consists of these graces ; and the whole cannot be in health and vigor, while the constituent parts are feeble, and in a state of decay. The same remarks are applicable to the mortification of sin ; we are prone to view our depravity too much in the general, and under this view to repent of it and humble ourselves on account of it ; whereas, in order to make any considerable progress in this part of sanctification, we must deal with our sins in detail. We must have it as a special object, to eradicate pride and vain glory, covetousness, indolence, envy, discontent, anger, &c. There should be appropriate means used, suited to the extirpation of each particular vice of the mind. It is true indeed, that if we water the root we may expect the branches to flourish ; if we invigorate the principle of piety, the several Christian virtues will flourish ; but a skilful gardener will pay due attention to both the root and the branches ; and in fact, these graces of the heart are parts of the root ; and it is by strengthening these, that we do invigorate the root.— And the same is true, as it relates to the remaining principles of sin : we must strike our blows chiefly at the root of the evil tree, but those inherent vices which were mentioned, and others should be considered as belonging to the root, and when we aim at their destruction, particularly and in detail, our strokes will be most effectual.

I shall mention, at present, but one other cause of the slow growth of believers, in piety, and that is the neglect of improving in the knowledge of divine things. As spiritual knowledge is the foundation of all genuine exercises of religion, so growth in religion is intimately connected with divine knowledge. Men may possess unsanctified knowledge and be nothing the better for it ; but they cannot grow in grace without increasing in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Being," says Paul, "fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." "Grow in grace," says Peter, "and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Mr. Edwards remarks, that the more faithful he was in studying the Bible, the more he prospered in spiritual things. The reason is plain ; and other Christians will find the same to be true.—*Dr. Alexander.*

FICKLENESS IN DOCTRINE.

There always has been, and always will be, a desperate and deadly conflict between truth and error, nor can there be any compromise between them. The bastard charity of the day is very clamorous to make us give up all that we account precious, or at least to compound with and not to molest their contraries. But the demand is absurd and the concession impossible. It is the *nature of truth* to be the most intolerant thing conceivable. The truth is and can be but *one*. And the father of lies plays off his most ancient, most extensive, and most successful game, when he can sow in the church the seeds of all sorts of discordant principles touching the faith and hope of sinful men. In this, it is true, God does, as he does in other cases, bring good out of evil. *There must be heresies among you*, i. e. divisions on account of the truth, *that they which are approved may be manifest among you*.—Thus it fared with the churches in the days and under the eyes of the apostles themselves. The apostle Paul was constantly in armour combating for the faith that had been delivered once for all to the saints. Every gross corruption of the gospel, every foolish and fantastic whim invented and broached by men of reprobate minds, or of distorted imagination, infested the churches in as great a variety as at any later period. Perhaps modern times cannot reckon a single deviation from the gospel, which in form or in substance, was not a curse of the apostolic age. No sooner were the pestiferous notions started, than crowds started and ran after them. If any thing, in the meanwhile, struck the fancy of one who was or who wished to be a leader, a part of the crowd would turn aside after *him*.—Some of them, after fatiguing themselves in the pursuit of every vanity, would perchance return to a sober mind, and re-adhere to the cause which they had deserted. Others again, though cured of one extravagance, were just as ready to fall into another as the occasion recurred, and many, proceeding from one step to another in their evil course, at last made shipwreck of the faith altogether, and became downright apostates, abandoning the grounds of their confidence before God and the communion of his people, and *perishing at last in their own corruption*. *These were they who separated themselves; sensual not having the Spirit. They went out from us*, says John, *but they were*

not OF us, for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us ; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

It is not otherwise yet. Old errors of every sort, which have been exploded long ago, revive, are new-dressed, and recommended to the acceptance of the religious world. I say *old errors*, for the devil's wit is not inexhaustible, and therefore his delusions, plausible though they be, are only stale articles newly tricked up to the ignorant and the conceited. All that the "rational Christianity" of the day glories in as its own discoveries has many centuries ago been cast out of the Christian church as *heresies of perdition*. But come when they will, and how they will, they are sure of a ready reception, and many abettors, among those who are *tossed to and fro, and are carried about with every wind of doctrine*. They indeed call themselves "philosophers" and "liberal inquirers;" but the apostle calls them by their true name, "babblers," and will allow them no place among inquirers but the place of those *who are ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth*. Learn what they will, the truth is what they do not learn and never can perceive. They have no fixed first principles ; nothing to keep them firm and steady in the hour of temptation, or to prevent them being led away by the error of the wicked. In the calm sunshine, while there is no disturbance of the church's tranquillity, they mingle with the multitude and pass for Christians. But when the storm gathers, the waters swell, the winds blow they are shaken from their own steadfastness. They never were secured to the rock of safety, but lay loose and idle upon the surface. Now the trial hath reached them, and without strong moorings, without grapplings, without anchors, without any fastenings, they are swept out of the Christian roads, and are the sport of the waves and the winds on the trackless ocean. Soon are they scattered away from the rock ; and while they run, swift as the evil blast can drive them, towards certain destruction, they are elated, ignorant as they are, with the rapidity of their course, until they are suddenly dashed among the breakers, or engulfed in the billows, or absorbed in the quicksands. Thus terminates their adventurous speculation, and the last news of the poor souls is, "they perished!"

I have been referring to the errors, in the success of which the Destroyer goes directly to his proper work, the irretrievable ruin of men. But a capital error seldom comes alone ;

so there are many smaller deviations from the soundness of the faith which attend the steps and prepare the way for that which strikes at the foundation of entire Christianity. It is melancholy and incredible to see what a mere puff of wind is sufficient to drive many a gallant looking vessel out of her course; and the odds are infinitely against her, and before she recovers it, she falls among enemies who decoy her to her ruin. Without figure, you often find those who, upon the whole, are friendly to the truth; yet by the merest trifle in the world—something which appears to them ingenious when it is only absurd—something which is recommended by a respectable name—something of which the whole attraction is its supposed novelty—turns them aside from “the old-paths where is the good way.”

The swarms of little sects, which spring up and die almost as soon as they are known, yet for the time being vex the friends and furnish matter of exultation to the foes of evangelical doctrine, owe their origin, for the most part, to a paltry individual vanity. The peace of the church is broken; her strength is divided; the vigor of her sons is impaired by foolish contention. The wily adversary does not let the occasion slip. Many who set out with an apparent trifle, do not end till they have made inroads upon the substantial truth; and Christians are called to struggle with an enemy who has already penetrated their camp. On such fickle beings you never can count; they want that sobriety of mind, that Christian common sense, which is proof against such small attacks, and is infinitely better for preserving the order and the truth of God pure and entire, than the finest genius and the profoundest learning can be without it.—*Mason.*

INJUSTICE OF THE WAR IN CHINA.

The following views of the conduct of Great Britain, in the matters referred to, are just, correct, and fully deserved. They are taken from “*The Friend of India*,” published at Calcutta.

In demanding indemnity for the twenty thousand chests of contraband Opium, which the Chinese Government has confiscated, we cast a stain upon our national honor, which will not easily be obliterated. The Chinese seized and destroyed

the drug, in conformity with laws which we cannot but acknowledge they had a right both to enact and to enforce.—The smugglers knew the risk they ran in their attempts to force the drug clandestinely into the country. They knew well that the impunity with which it had been smuggled in, arose solely from the supineness or venality of the Local Authorities. Was the Imperial Government debarred by this circumstance from sending officers of greater integrity and nerve to put in execution the laws of the Empire? Can the Chinese, after all the warnings held out against the introduction of the drug, be still responsible to the smugglers for having confiscated it? It is very true that the Chinese employed a barbarous and unjustifiable mode of executing their laws; but we ought not to forget that our conduct in forcing this article into the empire, contrary to its laws, was even less justifiable than the means which the Chinese used for the exclusion of it. If we were to weigh in a just balance the guilt of Commissioner Lin's act of seizure, with the guilt of those whose conduct may be said to have forced him to the adoption of it, we know which scale would preponderate. In the whole matter of the Opium, the Chinese Government has been more sinned against than sinning. And we are sorry, therefore, to find so unjust a cause of war as that of demanding an indemnity for smuggled goods, mixed up with the just cause of demanding reparation for our injured honor, and security for future justice. We are sorry to see the British flag waving in the cause of the smuggler and the demoralizer of society. We do not ask what effect this must produce on the Chinese, but we ask whether it will not tend to lower our character throughout Europe? The justifiable cause of war will be lost sight of in the enormity of our having adopted that motive which no sophistry can justify. The moral inconsistency of our conduct cannot fail to produce a powerful feeling against us. In Europe, we are the advocates of freedom, justice, equity. In Asia, the abettors of the most gigantic system of smuggling which the world has ever seen.—With what feelings must Europe view our recent conduct towards Portugal, in the matter of the Slave Trade, when it is known that we are nationally employed in growing Opium for a country in which it is strictly forbidden; that, as individual merchants, we are engaged in forcing the drug upon the people of China; and that after it had been seized and destroyed by the public authorities of the empire, we are now

sending an armament, the largest which has ever been seen in the Asiatic seas, to levy a penalty on the Chinese, to the extent of millions, as an indemnity for the confiscated article?

CONVERSION OF PAPISTS.

Mr. Rate, a missionary in France, has lately presented to the public a narrative of the Evangelical Church at Lyons, from which the following interesting facts are derived.

Roman Priest.—A Roman Priest, having openly renounced Popery had to encounter not only the bitterest reproaches of his father, who denounced him as an apostate and the disgrace of his family—but also the rage of a fellow Priest who threatened to destroy him whenever he should meet him. Notwithstanding, the convert is endeavoring most diligently to turn the surrounding Romanists from the error of their ways.

Jews.—Two Jews, after experiencing the firmest and most unremitting hostility of their relatives, have openly professed their attachment to the Messiah, and are now zealously engaged in advancing his kingdom.

Soldiers.—Several of the military have lately embraced the Gospel, and are now exerting all their influence among their comrades, that they also may become soldiers of Christ.

A Poor Woman.—A Protestant woman, sick in the hospital at Lyons, was visited by nuns, who strenuously labored to induce her to abandon the faith; but their endeavors were fruitless. A wealthy lady next proffered her a comfortable situation if she would embrace Popery. The poor woman repelled the temptation by answering as in prayer—"The Lord preserve me from selling my Master as Judas did!" A few nights after that refusal, *one of the Nuns* carried the sick woman what she pretended was a dose of medicine. Suspecting the Nun's design, the patient took but a very small quantity of the liquid which produced almost instantly a violent and alarming sickness. On the next day she showed the phial to the medical attendant, who told her, that had she taken the whole contents, they would have made her sleep forever!

A Nun.—A Nun, having given all her fortune to a convent in the south of France, then went to reside in it. But her conscience being disquieted with her course of life, she privately obtained access to a Colporteur, and learned from him the Gospel of salvation.—Exposing herself to the persecution of her friends, and sacrificing her property, she abandoned the convent, fled to Lyons, and became a member of the Evangelical church in that city. Soon after she received a letter from her sister, desiring to see her, that she

might be instructed in the way of life. The distance to her father's house was three hundred and sixty miles—and when she arrived there, she found that the whole design of the invitation was this, that she might be forced to return to the Popish bondage. Menaces and promises were equally futile. One of the Priests enraged at her constancy, enquired—“*what devil incarnate has put such sentiments into your head?*”—and said, that she should not avow them before the world. She replied, that she should be happy to proclaim them before all the inhabitants of that vicinity. She was then conducted before a magistrate, as a lunatic—but after bearing a triumphant testimony to her faith and hope in Christ Jesus, she was set at liberty. Subsequently she returned to Lyons, and is now supporting herself by her own labor; while by her holy example, she is an ornament to the Church of which she is a very edifying member.

Thirty-two Romanists have been converted; and have united themselves to the Evangelical Church at Lyons, during the first nine months of the year 1840.—*Chr. Int.*

THE TOWER OF BABEL.

The following account of the tower of Babel is from Sir Robert K. Porter's travels in Western Asia between the years 1817 and 1820, as quoted by Professor Silliman in a late number of his *Journal of Science*.

This is an immense pile of ruins—at its base it measures 3,082 feet (in circuit,)—width 450 feet; it presents two stages of hills;—the first about 60 feet high, cloven into a deep ravine by the rain, and intersected by the furrows of ages. To the base of the second ascent is about 200 feet from the bottom of the entire pile, and from the base of this ruin to the top is 35 feet. On the western side, the entire mass rises at once from the plain in one stupendous though irregular pyramidal hill, broken in the slope of its sweeping acclivities by time and violence. The south and north fronts are particularly abrupt towards the point of the brick ruin; on the north side there are large piles of ruins of fine and solid brick-work, projecting from among immense masses of rubbish at the base; the fine bricks were evidently part of the facing of this side. The tower-like ruin of the extreme summit is a solid mass 28 feet broad, made of the most beautiful brick masonry, and presenting the apparent angle of some structure originally of a square shape, the remains of which stand on the east to the height of 35 feet, and to the south 22 feet. It is rent from the top to nearly half way down; the remains of the masonry are furnace burnt bricks: they are united by a calcareous cement about a quarter of an inch in thickness, hav-

ing in it a layer of straws, and so hard that it could not be separated. The base of the structure was not altered, but the piles of fine bricks thrown down were vitrified with the various colors, and they gave the ringing sound belonging to the vitrifications of glass in the manufactories ; the lines of cement are visible and distinct, and are vitrified. The consuming power appears to have acted from above, and the scattered ruins fell from a higher point than the summit of the present standing fragment.

“The heat of the fire which produced such amazing effects must have burned with the force of the strongest furnace ; and from the general appearance of the cleft in the wall and these vitrified masses, I should be inclined, says the author, to attribute the catastrophe to lightning from heaven. Ruins, by the explosion of any combustible matter, would have exhibited very different appearances.”—The entire surface of the structure appears to have been faced with fine brick.

OBITUARY OF MR. JOHN WALLACE.

Died, in Pittsburgh, on the 28th of October, 1840, John Wallace. He was born in Ayrshire, Scotland, Jan. 25th, 1781, emigrated to the United States in 1803, after which time he lived in Pittsburgh, till his death, excepting a short period soon after his arrival to this country, that he spent near Xenia, Ohio.

He became a member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church before he left Scotland. With her distinctive principles he was well acquainted, and to them he was warmly attached. Though he carefully avoided every thing ostentatious in religion, it was nevertheless known to them who were intimately acquainted with him, that “he walked with God.” This is still more evident from papers found after his decease, which exhibit in a most interesting light, his spiritual exercises. Among these papers there is a covenant into which he personally entered with God, and which he frequently renewed in the most solemn manner with fasting and prayer.—These papers furnish abundant matter for an extended memoir. This is, however, not designed. He was very active in all the benevolent and moral enterprises of the age, in which he could join consistently with his religious profession. Before he joined any society of a voluntary kind he always carefully examined its constitution in the light of revelation. In any thing connected with the spiritual good of men, when engaged, he persevered with unceasing diligence. To the work of sending abroad the scriptures to the destitute he addressed himself with all his energy. To his instrumentality many owe the enjoyment of that inestimable blessing—the *Bible*.

By General Synod at its last meeting, he was appointed treasurer for the Theological Seminary. His removal is a stroke which will be felt by that institution. There is no doubt but, had he been spared, he would have felt it his duty "to spend and to be spent" to support the school of the prophets. His last illness was of but a week's duration. The disease was pneumonia. He suffered much bodily pain, but retained his mental powers in a great measure unimpaired to the last. Faith exercised on the precious promises sustained him under his trials. "The righteous hath hope in his death." His friends indeed mourn, but not as those who have no hope. Let the fatherless children trust in their father's God. Let them take him for their own God. Earthly friends—society generally—and the church militant have sustained a heavy loss—but the church triumphant, there is satisfactory ground to believe has gained a member—by his death. Let all be admonished to prepare for death, by taking the Lord Jesus as "made of God to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption."

FUGITIVE SLAVES.

The Legislature of Vermont has passed an act regulating the proceedings on claims for runaway slaves, which is highly important in its bearings on the great question of human liberty. Its chief provisions are, that the claim must in all cases be passed upon by a jury—that if the decision is given against the claimant, the alleged slave shall never again be molested upon the same claim, and any subsequent arrest or removal of the alleged slave out of the state, under any process whatever, shall be punished as kidnapping—that the state's attorney shall appear for the alleged slave, receiving his compensation from the state—that the alleged slave shall be entitled to subpoenas without charge—that the claimant, before his claim is entertained, shall give a bond to the state, in the penal sum of \$1000, conditioned to pay all cost and expense justly chargeable upon him, two dollars a week for the support of the alleged slave, while in custody, and one hundred dollars to the alleged slave, besides his damages, if the claim is not sustained—and finally that any attempt to remove any alleged slave without the authority of law shall be punished with a fine of \$500 to the party aggrieved, and imprisonment in the state prison for not more than ten years.

ITEMS OF INTELLIGENCE.

The most important intelligence received by the late arrivals from Europe, is briefly presented in the following items :—

The Ministerial Address of the French Chamber of Deputies, in reply to the speech of the King, at the commencement of the ses-

sion, has been adopted by a large majority, 247 to 161—thus securing the predominance of the peace party in the councils of the nation.

The restoration of Mehemet Ali to the *hereditary* government of Egypt, and his consequent full adhesion to the terms proposed to him by the allied powers, has removed all apprehensions of a serious collision arising out of the Eastern question at the present moment. Yet it cannot be concealed that unfavorable feelings have been excited in France, by the course pursued by the other great European powers in this matter.

The English forces invading China have made themselves masters of the Island of Chusan, without meeting any resistance worthy of a name, and have then directed their strength to the blockade of other important points, and perhaps to an attempt of Peking itself.—It would also seem that the possession of Canton is contemplated by them, or at least the destruction of the forts at the Bogue. What may be the eventual success of their measures, time alone can determine; it is, however, very clear, that the Chinese are totally unable to meet their assailants in open warfare.

The general tenor of the accounts from China is, however, that the government of the Celestial Empire was preparing an obstinate resistance of the passive description—the population appearing to be with the government against the foreigners, and there is every appearance of a protracted and finally uncertain result, from this distant, unjust, and very ill-advised, ill-arranged, and, in England, unpopular foreign war. There is, also, intelligence that the King of Siam has espoused the cause of the Chinese, and threatened the extirpation of all the Europeans in his dominions, if the Chinese junks in his waters should be attempted to be attacked. It is, therefore, by the American merchants to be regretted that the proceedings of the English government should appear to be interrupting the trade, not only with China, but in all the Eastern seas.

The English Journals contain a vast mass of intelligence from their Indian Empire, generally of a favorable character. Dhost Mohammed, the former sovereign of Afghanistan, has been defeated, wounded, and fled from the scene of action.

Population of England.—The English papers give an abstract of the Report of the Registrar-General, from which it appears that the population of England and Wales is computed to have been 15,666,800 on January 1, 1839. The population of the United Kingdom was then about 27,267,844. It may now amount to 27,774,200 persons, comprising 6,080,000 fencible men, aged 20 and under 60.—Ireland possesses rather less than one-third (32 per cent.) of the entire population. The population of France is about 34,370,000.—The report states that the number registered for England and Wales in the year ending June 30, 1839, were:—Births 480,540, deaths 331,007, marriages 121,083. The proportion of the marriages to

the population was 1 in 129. It appears from the abstract of marriages, that in the whole of England and Wales, out of 121,083 couples married, there were 40,587 men, and 58,959 women who could not write.

The number of Quakers in England and Wales, estimated by the number of marriages, is about 10,000—and of Jews about 20,000.

Progress of Mormonism.—A Mormon Newspaper entitled “Times and Seasons,” has been started at Nauvoo, Illinois. The first number gives a history of the “Rise of the Church,” (the *true* church, of course,) by which it appears that the Mormons recognise the entire Scriptures, including an “infinite atonement,” by the Redeemer.—Another article on the “Gospel” interprets the passages giving the Apostles the power of miracles, speaking in unknown tongues, &c. literally, and as applicable at this day. The Mormons have a regular Priesthood, “elders,” &c. and “Aaronic” order, &c. It appears that they have numerous societies in various parts, the following being incidentally mentioned: Philadelphia, 255 members. New-York, 210. Brooklyn, L. I. 19. Hempstead, L. I. 20. Monmouth co. N. J., 25. Chester co. Pa. 135. Lancaster co. Pa. 84. New-Jersey, 116. Oneida, N. Y. 80.

At a recent meeting in Preston, England, 1800 members were present. Believing that the time for the “gathering” has arrived, they have selected several points in the West for the home of the Latter Day Saints. The settlement at Nauvoo is said to be flourishing, and they have put down another “stake” at Ramus, in the same state. The Book of Mormon is one of the inspired supplements to the Scriptures which, as they aver, were promised.—*Newark Sent.*

The Captured Africans.—The case of these unfortunate and cruelly treated men was expected to be taken up by the supreme court of the U. S. on the 16th ult., but it was postponed until the court would be full. The Chief Justice said, the court were unwilling to take it up without a full bench. Our readers have been informed that the case comes before the supreme court by an appeal, taken *by the United States* from the decree of the District court of Connecticut, ordering the Africans to be returned to their own country. A motion has been filed by their counsel to dismiss the appeal, chiefly because the United States are not a “party in interest” in the matter. It is indeed strange, that the United States should take such a position in this case as to make themselves the mere tool, if their appeal should be sustained, of Montez and Ruiz, the alleged owners, in having the Africans delivered to the Spanish Minister, the effect of which would be, it is almost certain, death to every one of them. The case is exciting great interest in Washington, and many say that the whole Southern slave-holding interest will be brought to bear against the poor victims of that merciless and sinful system, before which almost every thing in this nation has, at present, to bow down.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN,

EDITED BY

REV. M. RONEY, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION,

NEWBURGH.

VOL. IV.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—*Jude*.
"Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples."—*Isaiah*.

NEWBURGH, N. Y.

PRINTED BY J. D. SPALDING.

.....

1840-41.



INDEX

TO

VOLUME IV.

AUCHTERARDE case	95
Appendix to Minutes of Synod	193
Auricular confession, Popish	247
Appeals and Complaints	359
BEARINGS of the Distinctive Principles of the R. P. Church	8
Baptism, the Form of	97
CHRISTIAN Paradoxes	26
Chronological Recollections, &c.	27, 51, 81, 129, 225
Civil Magistracy as God's Ordinance	33
Covenanters' Communion at E. Nisbet in 1674	85
Calumnies of Romish priests against the Bible	93
Church of Scotland, the	153
Come and welcome to the Saviour	155
Causes of Fasting	184
" " Thanksgiving	187
China, the war against	254, 377
Canada, the Presbyterian Church of	276
Correction, a	347
DISTINCTIVE Principles of the R. P. Church	8
Directions for self-examination	279
Dominion, Mediatorial, over the Church	339
EXPLICATION of Matthew XIX. 16—22	1
Eight reasons against Universalism	15
Ecclesiastical proceedings,—W. S. Synod	157
" " S. Presbytery	158, 281
" " Synod	161
" " Presbytery of the Lakes	210
" " Irish Synod	222, 252, 297
" " Scottish Synod	257
" " E. S. Synod	281
" " Ohio Presbytery	314
" " Illinois Presbytery	365
Exposition of Hosea XIV. 1, 2	289
FORM of Baptism	97
Fasting, Causes of	184
Frazer, Joseph, Obituary of	220
France and England	287
Fickleness in Doctrine	375
GOD, on Trust in	65
Good works, the Nature of	118
" " the Necessity of	146, 237
" " the Desert of	273
HOSEA, XIV. 1, 2 Practical Exposition of	289
Hindrances to growth in grace	371

INDEX.

ITEMS of Intelligence	64, 95, 126, 223, 228, 332
Ireland, Reformed Pres. Synod of	222, 252, 297
“ Religious condition of	250
India, British Slavery in	255
JEWS, the	349
KNOX, the last days of	58
“ Sermon before Queen Mary	110, 203, 267, 308, 328
LETTER on the late schism	200
“ to Rev. D. Steele	216
“ to Bishop Hughes	383
“ from Rev. Wm. Sloane	316
MELCHISEDEC	13
McKee, Mrs., obituary of	63
Miracle, a Popish	125
Mormons, the	127, 384
Minutes of Synod	161
Mediatorial dominion over the Church	339
NATURE and Importance of contending for the Truth	40, 76, 101
Nature, Necessity and Desert of good works	118, 146, 237, 273
Notices of Books	256, 351
OBITUARY of Mrs. J. A. H. McKee	63
“ of Joseph Frazer	220
“ of John Wallace	381
PROCEEDINGS of Westminster Assembly	18, 46
Paradoxes, Christian	26
Publication of the banns of Marriage	69
Psalmody, on	104, 139
Presbyterian Church of Canada	276
Perfectionism, progress of	284
Queen Mary, Knox's Sermon before	110, 203, 267, 308, 328
RECOLLECTIONS, Chronological, &c.	27, 51, 81, 129, 225
Religious condition of Ireland	250
Reviews &c.	321
SLAVE Trade, Domestic	30
Synodical Sermons	90, 122
Slavery in Cuba	126
Sabbath Sickness	150
Schism, a	159
“ letter on the late	200
Scotland, Ref. Pres. Synod of	257
Self-examination, Directions for	279
Sloane, Rev. Wm., letter from	316
Stone, the, cut out without hands, &c.	334
Sabbath morning	344
TRUTH, the Nature and Importance of contending for	40, 76, 101
Trust in God	65
Turkey and Egypt	288, 383
Theological Seminary	348
Universalism, eight reasons against	15
Vain thoughts, on	243
WESTMINSTER Assembly, proceedings of	18, 46
Watchmen in the East	55
War in the East	320, 383
Wallace, John, Obituary of	381











UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 110923353